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ALICE MONTROSE;

OR,

THE LOFTY AND THE LOWLY.

GOOD IN ALL, AND NONE ALL GOOD.

BY MARIA J. McINTOSH,

AUTHOR OF "CHARMS AND COUNTER-CHARMS," &c.

"The North and the South, Thou hast created them."—PSALM lxxxix., v. 12.
"Light is shown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart."—PSALM xcvii., v. 11.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.
1853.

249. w. 203.

LONDON:
[illegible] by Adlard and Co., 22, Poland Street.

ALICE MONTROSE.

CHAPTER I.

"Stand not amazed: here is no remedy;—
In love, the heavens themselves do guide the state;
Money buys lands, and wives are sold by fate."

In Cambridge, cold and snow and sleet without, and sickness and poverty within, and yet "the blessing which maketh rich and addeth no sorrow" over all, and the warm hearts which make summer weather even in December, and the earnest Heaven-taught spirits which, "still achieving, still pursuing," are learning life's best lesson, "to labour and to wait" in faith and hope.

At Montrose Hall, flowers are breathing out their fragrance on the warm, sunny air, and birds are singing among the orange boughs, and the old oaks have put on their spring dress of brighter green, though over it still hangs the old gray drapery, and without all is joy and life, but within there is stagnation, lifelessness; the dust lies for days together undisturbed on the benches in the piazza, where a happy family party used to gather every evening,

and the rippling of the stream by the old wharf is heard mingling its sad minor with the humming bees and the singing birds, and Isabelle moves drearily through the day's appointed duties, of which the chief is the plantation school; at which, however, she must now teach without books, for strange pamphlets invoking the furies of rage and slaughter under the sweet name of charity, have been sent among the slaves, and our wise legislators have thought it easier to seal up the fountains than to purify them, or to give an antidote to the poison that had been thrown into them. Sometimes William Clarke comes, and she rouses herself to chat with him as of old, and something of girlish glee is in her voice, and twice a-week, when the newspapers are brought from the mail, a flush rises to her cheeks and a burning light is kindled in her eyes, and her hands tremble with eagerness while she searches them for records of the movements of the army in Florida; but the colour soon fades and the light dies out, and she goes on as before, wondering for what she was born, and when she shall lie down and rest. And this with a heart to love and a mind to understand the glories of the God above her and the wants of the world around her!

And Mrs. Montrose grows day by day sterner and colder. There are two rooms in her house which

she does not willingly enter; the one is that room in which her husband died, for that is haunted by his dying form, with one hand laid in blessing on the drooping head of a fair young girl,—the other the library, where she ever finds herself humbled before the memory of a form of gentle, almost childish grace, which assumes a character of womanly dignity as the words "a little love, a little kindness, these are all I ask or can accept," and these she gave not, and so her husband's sister and niece had gone forth from the home which he had promised should shelter them for ever, and now she has nothing else to give, though Isabelle mourns that the cold climate is killing her kind aunt, and Mr. Dunbar tells her that he is sure Alice and her mother must be in great straits, as he learns by questioning Alice in his letters that they have not sold their bank stock, and the United States Bank pays no dividend now. And she has nothing to give, scarce can she say she has a home to offer, for she knows not how long it may be hers. The third half-yearly payment of interest is approaching, and she has only half the sum secured, and knows not well where she is to get the rest; for it is the spring of 1837, the period of disaster and dismay, when men's hearts everywhere are failing them for fear, and cotton sells slowly, and large advances,

even from factors with crops in their hands, cannot be expected. And Uriah Goldwire comes and goes with his stealthy step, and his cunning eyes, and his low chuckle, and his strangely presumptuous allusions to her daughter's beauty; and she begins to feel a creeping terror in his presence, and bids Isabelle stay out of the room when he is there.

And in Florida, too, there are flowers and verdure, though both are sometimes wet with blood and blackened with smoking ruins, and the marchings and countermarchings still continue, and a manly sense of duty is beginning to replace in Donald's heart the childish cry for the sweets of life, and he no longer runs into debt, but rather is able occasionally to make a payment to Major Wharton,—for to such rank has the death of a senior officer exalted his friend—of some part of the small sum he had borrowed from him. And Major Wharton, there is little change there,—the same inflexible will, the same calm exterior, and the same passionate dream within, the fire burning deep below an icy surface. One change there is, he is beginning to grow sick of his trade. He sees no honour in shooting down half-armed men at the bidding of another. He cannot make himself a machine or get rid of his thinking faculties, and still he wonders why the evil was left or rather nursed into growth,

till shooting was the only remedy. On the whole, he doubts whether the true soldier be not a somewhat degenerate descendant of the knights of old. A severe but not dangerous wound received late in February does not cure his dissatisfaction, though, in truth, he is better pleased to know that the shooting is not all on one side. The wound heals, and by April he is again in the saddle; but he is feeble, and can bear little fatigue without bringing on fever; the surgeon looks grave, talks of the necessity of change, and, as just now there is existing one of those truces which have hitherto proved a brief but an agreeable variety to the burning and bloodshed, he has no objection to accept the leave of absence offered him, in order that he may spend his summer in a more northern climate, though he laughs at the grave professional looks, and knows that the present feebleness is but from loss of blood which kindly nature is fast repairing. Donald looks a little sadly at his preparations, not that he would keep him, but that he would go with him if he might. He will be very lonely when Major Wharton is gone; but that is not all, he is feeling very anxious about his mother and Isabelle. He always does feel sad when the period for the payment of that interest comes, and it is very near now; besides, he cannot help thinking there is something

evasive in the tone of his mother's letters; he cannot get a plain simple answer to the plain simple question, whether she is in funds to meet that payment.

Major Wharton's preparations were all made, he had waited two days for a letter which he wished to receive before he left Florida, and which he knew was on the way to him. An orderly had been sent to Tallahassee for their letters, and Donald sat with the Major in his tent awaiting his return. He came, and brought the expected letter, and another from Mr. Dunbar to Major Wharton, and to Donald, one from the dead letter office at Washington.

The reader may remember a letter written by Robert Grahame to Donald, from England, more than a year ago, offering to aid him in the payment of his debts, and averring that to do so was a simple act of justice in him, since to one of his family, in part at least, Donald owed his ruin. In replying to this letter, gratefully declining his kind offer, Donald, to prove that he did not need aid now, had informed his friend fully of the arrangements made for the liquidation of his debt. Better acquainted with business than Donald, trusting less to the forbearance of men, and knowing more of the sudden changes which so often disappoint cal-

culation and make forbearance necessary, Robert Grahame saw much to fear where Donald saw nothing; and the present letter was written as soon after the receipt of that from Donald as the necessary arrangements permitted, and inclosed to him a certificate of deposit of forty thousand dollars in the State Bank of Georgia, at Savannah, for his use, and subject to his order. The letter was directed, as the previous one had been, to Tampico, but the packet by which it was sent, having encountered a severe storm, the mail bags had been wet, and the direction of the letter so blurred, that it was sent to Pamlico instead, whence, after having lain a month in the office unclaimed, it had been forwarded to Washington. Lieutenant D. Montrose, U. S. A., was still plain, and its inclosure occasioned the army list to be consulted, and the letter to be forwarded to his present post. To the use of this inclosure Donald could not reasonably object, for Robert Grahame wrote, "I am really serving myself in this affair, for the money is at present lying idle, and I cannot ask better interest than the eight per cent. you are paying, or better security than you have given your present creditor. Permit me, then, to take his place, with the understanding that you shall never be troubled for either principal or interest, but shall pay them both in your own time and way."

"Well, this is noble in Grahame; just see, Wharton;" but as he looked up to communicate his good fortune to his friend, whose movements he had been too much absorbed in his own letter to observe, he found that he was pacing the room with an agitated step, a flushed brow, and arms tightly folded over his breast, as if to keep down the throbbing heart beneath—signs these of discomposure, seldom evinced by Major Wharton. They aroused Donald's anxiety, and he hurriedly asked, "What is the matter, Wharton?"

Major Wharton turned to him, but did not answer immediately; when he did, it was to say, "I think I shall set out to-night, Donald, and—and, I have half a mind to take Montrose Hall in my way—"

"That will be capital; you can do me an essential favour if you will; for see here what I have just received from Robert Grahame, good and true friend that he is, a certificate of deposit in the State Bank at Savannah of the whole amount of my debt to that Goldwire—"

"Thank God!" said Major Wharton, as he sank into a chair, pale and exhausted with emotion. Donald gazed at him in speechless astonishment; he had never seen him so moved.

"I may show you this letter now, Donald;" and Major Wharton drew from his pocket and handed

to Donald a letter from Mr. Dunbar to himself, just received. Donald opened it with painful apprehension, and read as follows:

Dear Major, The Parsonage, March 28th, 1837.

For I have heard with pleasure of your promotion as well as of our dear Donald's; but I have no time for congratulations. I write, as you may perceive, in great haste, for I believe the time has come which you anticipated, that there is mischief in this man; and if you can help, there is no time to lose. My apprehensions are of so vague a character, and founded on causes so undefinable, that I scarcely know how to justify them to you. I can only say that these apprehensions are likewise entertained, I am sure, by Mrs. Montrose, though she and I have held no communication on the subject. I have seen her shrink and grow pale at his entrance; and he comes now not with the humble, obsequious air which he formerly wore, but with, as it seems to me, a triumphant malice in his eye. He has said repeatedly that he hoped she would be ready for the 14th, the day of payment of the interest, as money was "dreadfully tight;" and he says it with a manner that makes me believe he does not hope it—that he rejoices in the thought of that failure which, according to the

terms of the bond, as I understand from Mr. Symonds, will enable him to foreclose the mortgage, and levy on the property without a suit. But the worst I have not yet told you; he has had at his house of late a slave-trader, and I have heard it whispered that he took him to the other Montrose plantations, though he did not dare to bring him to the Hall, as Donald had once already expelled the same man from his house; and Mrs. Montrose, woman as she is, and full of apprehension too, has too much dignity of manner not to inspire the man with some degree of awe, and prevent anything like open insult, while she still remains even nominal mistress there. And what is the motive for all this? To wring his money from them, you will say. I do not believe it; I do not believe, at least, that this is all. Why, if this were all, does he, by bringing this man—I cannot write his odious designation without pain—why does he, by bringing him here, intimate an intention to sell on the foreclosure, at a time when he knows he must lose by the sale, since such is the scarcity of money, that the property, though worth, when it was mortgaged, four times the amount of the mortgage, would not, I verily believe, bring half that amount now? No, depend on it, his purpose is to intimidate; and for what? I know not; and what I

suspect I feel that it would be dishonouring to—no, I will not mention her in such a connection except to pray—the Father of the fatherless shield our Isabelle from harm! Again, I say, what you can do must be done quickly. Here is the 5th, and the 25th will see this man's designs successful, or crushed. I would have written you before; but much that I write has been only known certainly to-day. I can write of nothing else, for heart and head are full of this; so with love to Donald,

I remain,

Yours, with respect and esteem,

H. DUNBAR.

"And I am tied here, tied hand and foot," cried Donald, as he gathered the contents of this letter with a rapid glance. "But I will go with or without leave; what care I for leave? I would give the rest of my life for one day at Montrose Hall now."

He had sprung from his chair, dashing it from him as he rose with a force which sent it almost across the room. The wild rage of ungoverned passion was in his eye. He was hurrying from the tent; but Major Wharton stood in his way. What he said it is useless to linger on. Enough that he convinced Donald it would be better to trust to

him than to go without leave: while the formalities necessary to obtain it would consume hours of time, every moment of which was precious. In less than an hour from the reception of these letters Major Wharton, in a light wagon, which carried both his baggage and himself very conveniently, was on the road to Tallahassee, where he would take the stage route for Savannah. This he believed would bring him to Savannah by the 12th of April, and, making all reasonable allowance for delays, would insure his being at Montrose Hall by the 13th. But he had to prove that time and tide obey no mortal power. His route crossed many streams. The spring freshet had been unusually great; the bridges were gone; the fording-places impassable; and though he left the stage, and taking only a valise with him, prosecuted his journey on horseback for fifty miles, he did not reach Savannah till mid-day of the 16th. He was annoyed, excited, but he did not despair. He had learned from Donald the terms of the bond held by Mr. Goldwire; and he knew that though the mortgage might be foreclosed on the failure to pay the half-yearly interest on the day appointed, and though it might be sold by a sheriff's order three days thereafter, there was a saving clause which ran thus: "Unless before the expiration of the third day the mortgage should

be redeemed by the payment of the full amount—forty thousand dollars—with interest thereon to the day of said payment." Now this third day would not expire till noon of the 17th, and he would sleep this night at Montrose Hall; or if he should arrive too late to find entrance there without disturbing the family unseasonably, at Mr. Dunbar's parsonage. With this determination, he was again on the road as soon as he had made certain arrangements at the bank, arrangements which were necessary to enable him to draw for the amount deposited by Mr. Grahame's agent to Donald's credit, and also to make immediately available a draft for one thousand dollars on the bank of New York, which had been received by him, on the eve of leaving Florida, in the letter for whose coming he had waited. Leaving him to pursue his journey as rapidly as he can, we will see what have been the developments of the last few days at Montrose Hall.

It is impossible to give any just description of the feelings with which Mrs. Montrose had seen the approach of the 14th of April. She had been able to sell but a small part of her crop; her factor could not make large advances; her people must be fed; and the banks would not discount the most unexceptionable paper on any terms. The coil of

destiny was around her, and she saw the dreaded day begin with only five hundred dollars to meet a demand of sixteen hundred. Hers was a stout spirit, but it could not but bend to such a storm. She walked the floor nearly all the night of the 14th, and came down the next morning pale and haggard. Isabelle looked even more pale, for she, too, knew that their property would that day lie at the mercy of a creditor, whom she believed to have no heart except for money. That he could make them poor was little; poverty to the young, who have never felt its iron grasp, is a name without much of terror. But that he could banish them from their home, with all its dear associations, that was a bitter thought; more bitter still, that he could tear their people from theirs, separate them from their families, and force them into the hands, it might be, of cruel men. This it was that made her cheeks pale, and her heart heavy. Well for her was it that her mother had carefully kept from her the belief she herself entertained, that by the sacrifice of herself—a sacrifice to which the world's wealth would have been no temptation, but to which her generous impulses might have urged her, even as they might have urged her down any other hideous gulf—she could redeem all.

"You had better go to your school, Isabelle,"

said Mrs. Montrose, after their sad breakfast; she wanted to be alone, and also to secure Isabelle's absence, when Mr. Goldwire should make his visit.

"I cannot go to it to-day, mother; it makes me too sad to think that ——." She paused abruptly, and turned away with tears in her eyes. "But surely, mother," she resumed, after a while, "some of our neighbours might help us, in this strait; Mr. Clarke, or ——"

"Isabelle, we want over a thousand dollars: of whom have we a right to ask it? and, though we should humble ourselves to ask where we have no right, who is likely to have it?"

Isabelle was silent, for these were questions she could not answer encouragingly, and perceiving her mother's wish to be alone, she soon retired to her own room.

At twelve o'clock, punctual to a minute, Mr. Goldwire came. His presence was announced by his usual chuckle, which seemed this morning more than commonly merry.

"He—he—he! you're ready for me, I suppose."

"Indeed, Mr. Goldwire, I am sorry to say I am not. You are aware that there has been more than usual difficulty in procuring money. Creditors everywhere have found it necessary, in consideration of the times, to exercise some indulgence, and

I hope you will do the same; I can pay you five hundred dollars."

"Five hundred!—but five hundred is just five-sixteenths of sixteen hundred; he—he—he!"

"I am aware of it, sir," and Mrs. Montrose paused—she could not condescend to beg the compassion of this man.

"Well, now, I'll tell you what," said Uriah, after waiting a moment with his still smiling face, for her to speak, and waiting in vain—"I'll tell you what; you've got a right handsome daughter. I never seen ——"

The blood had flushed to the pale brow of Mrs. Montrose, at the mention of her daughter, and she interrupted him to say, with a quick and proud accent, "I know not, sir, what my daughter has to do with any discussion between you and me."

"Well, that's what I'm just a-going to tell you; he—he—he! you see I want to marry, and your ——"

"Miss Montrose can have no possible interest in your wishes, on this or any other subject, sir," and the lady's eyes gleamed with a haughty fire.

"Well, but now, won't you shut up, and just hear to a man? You hadn't ought to talk so, if you want me to take five hundred for sixteen hundred—I can tell you that."

This was forcible reasoning; and with a crimson spot on each cheek, and her head thrown back, the lady fixed her eyes upon him, and stood to hear what made her pulses throb, and her heart swell with an indignation to which words could have given feeble expression.

In truth, Uriah meant to be generous in his offers for the girl who had so pleased his fancy. He would have settled Isabelle's fortune upon her —have relinquished all claim to that of Mrs. Montrose, and accepted Donald's as full payment of his forty thousand dollars. But we doubt whether Mrs. Montrose ever understood these generous intentions. From the moment he again mentioned her daughter's name, she clasped her hand on the chair beside her, and set her teeth hard, like one who had determined to endure; and when his voice had ceased to sound in her ears, she said, "Have you done, sir?"

"Why, yes, I think I've said about all; he—he—he!"

"Now, then, sir, hear me. You have entirely mistaken your position and that of Miss Montrose. No poverty could ever degrade her to your level. She is dishonoured by the thought, which no imaginable circumstance—no, not your having power of life or death over me, and all in whom I am interested, could induce me entertain for a moment."

The small eyes of Uriah gleamed with tiger-like ferocity, and there was in the laugh with which he still prefaced his speech something that made the blood creep. "I'll give you till the day after to-morrow to think better of that. I guess you'll think better of it. I guess you will, he—he—he! because you see if you don't, why at twelve o'clock the next day, Thursday, the seventeenth day of April, I'll foreclose the mortgage—I will; and I'll sell everything except this place,—land and niggers and all; I've got a man to buy the niggers, he's a regular clincher, and there a'nt one of 'm that won't see New Orleans before the summer's out, and I guess they'll find it a pretty hard business; all them stories they tell about nigger pens, and taking away young ones. I guess they'll know all about it."

"God help them and me!" issued from the pale lips of the lady.

"And—and—I guess I'll live here myself, it's a pretty good house—and—and—" he looked around as if in search of further modes of torture—"and that burying-ground there I'll plant with garden sauce, it must be pretty rich now and the tombstones will make good—good—well I guess they'll make good somethings."

All this was spoken without any manifestation of anger beyond the gleam in the eye and the some

what sharper, though by no means louder tone of voice. Before he concluded—indeed at the first reference to the burial-place Mrs. Montrose had sunk into a chair, while a groan, she could not suppress, burst from her, but she did not speak. Uriah stood opposite, looking at her fixedly for a moment, then taking his hat from the table, he said, "That's all for to-day, I guess—this is Monday, about six o'clock Wednesday evening I'll be here, and then I'll know what you've made up your mind to—and I guess I'll bring the man that's to buy the niggers—he'll like to look at 'em, and may be you'd like to see him; I guess, though, you won't like his looks—he's a hard one. Good morning—my love to Miss Is'bel."

And he was gone, and she was alone, with her crushed pride and her bitter apprehensions. Long she remained where he had left her, her eyes closed and her face very pale,—her head resting against the back of her chair. Suddenly she started up. Something must be done—there would be comfort to herself at least in action. Then, seeking Isabelle's room, she confided to her all of her interview with Uriah, except that which peculiarly concerned herself. Youth is ever hopeful, and Isabelle was sure something might be done. If her mother would write to Mr. Symonds and consult him she

would herself ride to Mr. Clarke and to two or three other of their nearest neighbours and see if they would not at least purchase some of the negroes and prevent their being driven from their homes and separated from each other. As they spoke together, the loud laugh for which the negro is remarkable, ascended to their ears, and mother and daughter shuddered at the sound. The afternoon was spent by Mrs. Montrose in consultation with Mr. Dunbar and Mr. Symonds, and by Isabelle in her projected errands of mercy. She returned with cheering news. All had entered warmly into her interests. An indignation which Uriah Goldwire with all his pertinacity would hardly brave was kindled. Oaths more deep than loud were sworn that the acts he threatened should be his own ruin, if he dared attempt them.

"Keep up your courage, my dear child, and tell your mother to keep up hers; we will be with her on Thursday before noon, and if he dare to bring that vile miscreant within your walls, he will find the place too hot to hold him," said Mr. Clarke.

William did more. He was already on his way to Savannah to see what could be done by his father's factor to raise money.—"We can at any rate find no difficulty," said Mr. Clarke and the other gentlemen, "in getting the amount your

mother wants to make her interest complete, and we will make the villain take it, if it be a day or two after time—it would not have been *that*, if your mother had not been too proud to confide her difficulties to her friends."

"Too proud,"—aye—there was the barb that made what would have been comparatively light a rankling, festering wound. Should this curse fall upon her innocent unconscious people, whose song, or whistle, or words of careless glee made such discord with her present thoughts, would she not feel that her hand had sped it on its way? Too proud to ask favours—too proud to acknowledge that her fortunes were in the hands of such a man—almost too proud to admit it herself, spite of the occasional apprehensions inspired by his manner—half believing that he would be awed into civility by the majesty of a Montrose of Montrose Hall; and now others—her people—her children—must suffer for her wrong-doing, unless indeed her friends should bring the aid she had so long disdained to ask. She could not share in Isabelle's elation. Though she should be spared the fulfilment of her worst terrors, her pride had received a deep wound. The wound might be healed, but the scar would long remain. But Night, the gift of Mercy to a sinning and suffering world, came on, and,

would herself r[illegible] conflicts of the day, she three other of [illegible] they would [illegible] her late husband's friends flocked negroes a[illegible] with expressions of interest and pro- homes [illegible] more earnest than definite. Such spoke [illegible] those threatened by Uriah Goldwire is r[illegible] been known amongst them. They were an [illegible] creditors to each other—no *gentleman*, it [illegible] their creed, could be otherwise. The punc- [illegible] of business and rigid construction of con- [illegible] necessary amongst mercantile men, however kindly disposed, wore to them an aspect of severity. The immediate foreclosure of the mortgage, there- fore, by Mr. Goldwire, on the failure of his debtors to pay the interest due, though perfectly accordant with the letter of his bond, seemed to them un- pardonable; but when to this was added the threatened abuse of his power—above all, his daring to bring among them a slave-trader—a character never seen in these districts of country where negroes are born, grow old, and die, and are succeeded by their children and their children's children on the same plantation, their indignation was thoroughly aroused, and Southern impetuosity overbore Southern indolence. Even Allan Clarke, the dreamer and the idler, whom a hunt failed to excite, was awake and active. Allan's idleness was

the idleness of one who had not yet been awakened to a sense of the important duties lying neglected all around him, and who found more pleasure in the bright world of his own creation than in the every-day enjoyments of this our common life. But as we have said, even he was now aroused, and might have been seen riding hither and thither with messages and notes all having the same object, namely, to excite a still wider interest, for "the good old family" which was in danger of being driven "by a pitiful Yankee" from the home at which they had lived in peace and honour for more than a hundred years. There is something cheering in sympathy, even if it have no help to proffer; and though Mrs. Montrose could not well see how her friends could disentangle the Gordian knot in which Uriah had bound her, unless like Alexander they should call force to their aid, she yet awaited the next interview which Uriah had threatened with tolerable calmness. She had requested Mr. Dunbar's presence, and he was there. Isabelle also would have been beside her mother, for greatly as she disliked Uriah, and indignantly as her heart had swelled beneath the freedom of his looks, she knew not that she had any further personal cause to shun him, and this was overborne by the desire to sustain her mother; but Mrs. Montrose quickly,

and somewhat sharply as it seemed both to Isabelle and Mr. Dunbar, forbade her to appear in that room.

"Then, mamma," said Isabelle, subduing, as she looked at her mother's pale face, a momentary flash of anger at being treated like a child, "at least, let me sit in the next room, where I may be near you. I shall fancy a thousand horrors if I am away."

"Sit anywhere you please, Isabelle, so as you come not here," was the seemingly ungracious reply; and going into the room adjoining, Isabelle set the door ajar, and placed her chair near it, prepared to play the part of listener—an arrangement which her mother would probably have prevented, if the concentration of her mind on the one subject of Uriah's arrival, had permitted her to observe it.

The clock struck six, and, punctual to the minute, Uriah Goldwire was at the gate of the Hall, with his villainous-looking companion. Dismounting himself, he said to the other, "You had better wait here, I guess. You know, if I can do it without frightening them, it will be all the better by and by; he—he—he!"

"I wish you'd stop your devilish laugh," was the savage reply from one who had evidently drunk too much to be cautious of his speech. "If you

leave me sitting on horseback here, * * *,"—we omit here certain expletives with which we cannot soil our page—" I'll make your —— purse pay for it."

Uriah only answered with his " He—he—he!" He was so near the attainment of his wishes, as he believed, that he could be both generous and jocose. With his usual quiet step he advanced through the yard, entered the house, and finding the doors open—as country doors are apt to be in warm weather—he proceeded to the parlour. The presence of Mr. Dunbar there somewhat disconcerted him. A grey-haired minister of God, whose life has been in accordance with his profession, is not a witness the most irreligious would choose for their acts of villainy, and Uriah fidgeted and talked of the weather, and then of important business, with the hope that the pastor's visit would come to an end; but at length, growing impatient, he approached the business of the hour, though in a somewhat more respectful manner than at his last visit. During his delay there had been an arrival which it would be well to notice, as it had an important bearing on the termination of the affair.

We left Major Wharton, it may be remembered, *en route* for Montrose Hall, from Savannah, on the afternoon of this very day. He had proceeded

about half way when he was overtaken by William Clarke, on horseback. William had not been very successful. His father's cotton was still unsold, and in such a dull state of the market, his factor could not venture to advance over five thousand dollars. He had tried various other modes of raising money with scarcely any effect, and feeling that his five thousand dollars might be of use the next day, he set out on his return disappointed, but not altogether disconsolate. From the gloomy prospect of the present, the young heart, impatient of sorrow, turned gladly to the promise of a happy future, of which it fondly dreamed.

"I would long ago have asked her to be mine, if I had not been discouraged by the change that seemed to come over her after her father's death, and I dare say now, all that seemed reserve and coldness to me, was only a little pride to which her fear of coming poverty had lent a stimulus. Dear Isabelle, if you must leave Montrose Hall, you shall find warm hearts ready to welcome you at Fairhope. How my mother will love her!" and then William went off into a thousand vagaries of imagination which pictured scene after scene of a joyful existence; and ever the principal figure in the picture was a tall and dark-eyed lady. His own thoughts were such pleasant companions, that he almost re-

gretted meeting Major Wharton, who, anxious for the latest news from the Hall, persuaded him to get into the carriage with him, and to suffer the man who had driven him from Savannah, but from whom, in his impatience, he had long since taken the reins, to ride his horse. Major Wharton heard all he wished to hear, and something more. William did not mean to be very confidential with the major; he had always, indeed, felt particularly reserved with him; but it may be that his dreams had intoxicated him, and that in the intoxication of pleasure, as of wine, there is truth. Be this as it may, it is certain that long ere they reached the Hall, William's heart lay like a plainly printed page before his companion's eye, and he had read it; and the close-set lips disclosed not, nor did the stern brow reveal, what that reading cost him.

We fear that on this journey Major Wharton could hardly have borne the scriptural test of the merciful man, that he "is merciful to his beast." We know not much of the power of memory in horses, but we are disposed to think those he drove that day did not easily forget the road over which they passed together. They arrived at Montrose Hall soon after Uriah Goldwire had entered the house.

"Who have we here?" cried Major Wharton,

as his eye fell on the man who had accompanied the usurer.

"I will leave you to see, I am impatient to carry the good news to Is—to Miss Montrose," said William Clarke as he sprang from the carriage and proceeded immediately to the house.

Major Wharton paused to ask a question of his old friend Agrippa, who had approached on seeing him, and having received his answer, to say, while he fixed a look of withering scorn upon the stranger, "If that man attempts to enter the gate, call me," before he followed.

"Where is Miss Isabelle?" was William Clarke's only question; it was answered by a servant girl he met in the piazza.

"Him in de library, sir, but Missis da in de parlour."

To the library William went with rapid steps. Isabelle was there in truth. She had risen from the chair in which she had been seated, and stood in a listening attitude, with a face now flushed with indignation and shame, and now pallid with fear.

"Isabelle," cried William Clarke, and in an instant she was beside him, his hand clasped in hers, uttering in low, but eager accents, with pale, trembling lips, the adjuration "Save me! save me from that man!"

"I will, I will, my darling Isabelle. In my arms, you shall be safe from him, from all!" He passed his arm around her waist, and drew her closer to his side; nor did she repulse the caress, but still clasped his hand, only whispering, "Save me! save me!" while he poured forth from a full heart, words of tenderness and soothing assurances.

Suddenly, there was the sound in the next room of a quick stride, and a voice not heard before. Isabelle lifted her drooping head, and turned it towards that room. Forgetful of all but her, William would have continued speaking, but raising her hand, she whispered, "Hush! hush!" and he too looked and listened. Just where the slightly opened door permitted them to see him, pale with passion, and speaking in tones not loud, but deep and stern, stood Major Wharton. The words they heard were, "Hold sir! dare not to utter that name again, if you would not have me trample out your vile life beneath my feet."

"I ain't afraid of you, sir, and I'll say Miss Is——" here Major Wharton made a step forward, and Uriah retreated behind Mr. Dunbar's chair, where believing himself in comparative safety, he began, "Well, I guess it ain't no offence—"

"No offence! No offence that you—*you*,"

with an emphasis on the monosyllable which seemed to say it was the most vituperative epithet that memory could suggest to the speaker, "should dare to raise your insolent eyes to one so elevated in her own peerless beauty and nobility of nature that I feared to dishonour her by the proffer of my homage. Vile miscreant! your thought was profanation, your touch—" Major Wharton paused with an expression of disgust, then continued more rapidly, "before it could approach her, I—yes, I, who so love her, that my heart thrills at her name, spoken even by *your* lips, I would myself lay her in an unpolluted grave."

William Clarke heard no more; he turned to look at Isabelle. His arm still encircled her, but she was probably unconscious of it; as she stood there, still in the attitude of a listener, with her head slightly bent, "the rosy light of love" beaming in her eyes, and glowing on neck, and cheek, and brow, and a smile inexpressibly soft, yet bright, playing around her lips. Never had he seen her so beautiful, yet it was a beauty which tortured him.

"Isabelle! you love him!"

She did not answer—he doubted if she heard him.

"Oh, Isabelle!" he cried, with despairing

earnestness, but again Major Wharton was speaking, and without moving, without even a look towards him, there came from her scarce parted lips, the low "Hush! hush, William!" He withdrew the arm that encircled her waist, and hurried from the room. As he reached the door, he turned to look upon her once more, with a faint hope that she would recall him, but she still stood as he had left her—intently listening—as regardless, probably as unconscious of his departure as she had been of his presence. William rushed from the room, from the house, threw himself into his saddle, and, putting spurs to his horse, was far upon the road before Agrippa had found voice for the expression of his surprise. On, on he went; he was on a horse remarkable for fleetness, and he urged him to his utmost speed; yet, compared to the whirl of thought and feeling within, his motion seemed slow. He longed to ride upon the wings of the rushing wind, to be borne far, far from every association of his past life. His father, mother, sisters, Allan, his home—he hated them all at that moment; he thought he should be glad to know that he would never see them more. So strong was the impulse to escape them, for the present at least, that he would probably have passed his own road, and gone on hardly knowing where, had not

the accidental striking of his hand against the pocket book, in the breast pocket of his coat, reminded him of the draft it contained; he could not go off with that; and, at the thought, he wheeled sharply round, and galloped homeward. Passing the house where he was accustomed to alight, he rode on to the stables, sprang to the ground, and without even a look to the servant who came forward to take his horse, turned back towards the house. The groom looked after his usually gay-hearted and affable young master with surprise. But the pace at which William walked soon took him beyond the servant's speculations. He entered the house; the doors were all open; the rooms empty: the family must be away, all away—that was most fortunate—he would go to his room, to bed—he would be tired, ill—anything which would give him the luxury of solitude for this evening, for this night. He hastened to his room, entered, and was about to lock himself in, when Allan, always a great lounger, started from the bed, where he had passed the last hour, with one of Scott's romances, exclaiming, "William! why when did you come? But, my dear Will, what is the matter?"

While uttering the last question, Allan had drawn near his brother, and rested his arms af-

fectionately on his shoulders. William was, as we have seen, in no mood for brotherly caresses. He threw Allan off, with a force of which he was not himself aware—a force which sent him reeling half way across the room, and caused him to strike his left arm, the wrist of which had been badly strained a short time before, and was still supported in a sling, violently against the foot-board of a bedstead. Allan turned very pale and uttered a low groan, as he raised himself up. In an instant William was at his side, saying, "I am very sorry—I did not mean to hurt your arm, Allan!"

"I do not mind my arm much," said Allan, yet in spite of himself, his lip quivered, and a tear rose to his eye. His gentleness touched William more than any reproach would have done, and taking his brother's hand, he said, "Forgive me, Allan, for I am very miserable."

There can be no half-way confidence of such disappointment and sorrow as William Clarke was enduring. Let a deep and rapid current find but the smallest opening in the dam which confines it, and it will soon sweep away all opposition from its course; and so Allan soon knew all his brother's love, and hope, and despair.

"My poor William, I do feel deeply for you, and for Isabelle, too, and for Major Wharton."

"For him! and why for him?" asked William, stopping in his rapid walk to and fro through the room, and turning with half angry expression towards his brother, who sat quietly upon the side of the bed.

"Because if, as I think from what you have told me, he is withheld from addressing Isabelle by some notion of honour, the only thing that could make him overleap that barrier would be the knowledge that Isabelle's happiness was concerned in it, as well as his own. Now this, Isabelle certainly will not tell him, and you are the only other person who can." Allan said these last few words slowly, earnestly. William's face grew darker; he resumed his strides across the room, and Allan, who had watched him fixedly, with a heavy sigh concluded —"And so, William, I say poor Major Wharton, and poor, poor Isabelle!"

"And why is that double poor for Isabelle? I think you are very prodigal of your sympathy to-night to others, and very sparing of it to your brother."

"No, no, dear William; I give *them*—I give Isabelle especially—my *pity*, my *sympathy* is for you."

"I do not understand your distinctions, Allan, and I do not care for them. I only know that

Wharton has all that I would ask to make me perfectly happy—Isabelle's love, and that Isabelle knows she has his, and that she cares no more for me, no, not so much as for the dog in her father's halls."

"And yet, it seems to me you hold in your hands the happiness of her whole future life."

"I? Isabelle's happiness?"

Again William stood still, and looked fixedly at his brother, and Allan's eyes were full of a generous enthusiasm, such as rarely outlives our youth, as he said—"Yes; you can give Major Wharton a reason which will overbear all scruples for confessing to Isabelle what he has only betrayed to others."

"And you expect me to tell this man that the heart he prizes less than his own fantastic notions of honour has given itself to him unsought? Allan, you know not what a man's love is, or you would never dream of this."

"God grant I may never know what a man's love is if it be a feeling so selfish as to make me willing to drag down into the gulf of my own misery what I profess to love: far different from this is the love of which I have dreamed!"

"And may I ask what was this fair dream?"

The question was in a tone of bitter mocking,

and an enthusiastic spirit shrinks ever from mockery; yet, though Allan's face grew red, he was too much in earnest, in his present purpose, to be silenced.

"I have dreamed," he said, "and it was a fair dream, of a love that was not a selfish craving for something we deemed necessary to our own enjoyment, such as a child's for a sugar-plum, but rather the heart's homage to what it deemed best and most beautiful; such an homage as, if it did not altogether extinguish selfish passion, left it but the second place in the soul, giving the first place ever to the honour and the happiness of the object beloved. To what noble action such a love would lead in circumstances like yours! how it would labour for the happiness of the beloved! how it would force her to honour him! aye, and to love him too, as the source of all her own future joy. Ah! men, if they only knew it, might be knights '*sans peur et sans réproche*,' now as well as in old chivalrous times."

Dream on, youth, while such are thy dreams!

But the dream seemed like a reproach to William, and his heart was too bitter to bear reproach to-night, and he said, "Allan, I wish you would leave me alone, I really do not know what you are talking about; though it seems to me you have been repeating some romantic speech out of

a novel. If you want to do me a service, tell them down stairs that I am tired, gone to bed; anything that will keep them out of my room. Stop, give my father that," handing him the draft from his pocket-book, "and tell him he will not want it; Major Wharton has from Donald the full amount necessary to redeem the mortgage. Now, good night."

Allan went without a word; but William found that, in getting rid of him, he did not get rid of the train of thought he had awakened—the suggestions he had made. Through the silent watches of the night, again and again, Isabelle, as he had seen her that afternoon, in all the radiance of new-born hope, was before him, and Allan's words, "force her to honour—aye, and love him too, as the source of all her future joy," were sounding in his ears; and when he would shut his ears to them, a voice in his soul asked, "Will you drag her down to the gulf of your own misery?" At length he determined no longer to evade the question, but to meet it fairly and fully; not to glance at it merely as it flitted ghastly and ghostlike before him, but to walk fairly up to it, examine it by the clear, open daylight of reason, and decide it for ever. "And what reason," he asked himself, playing, according to custom, the part both of advocate and of judge

in his own cause, "what reason have I to give for intruding myself upon the private affairs of Major Wharton or of Miss Montrose?" And conscience answered, "The love you have professed for Isabelle is reason enough for any interference by which you feel assured that her happiness will be promoted."

"And how do I know that such interference on my part is necessary? Having avowed his love before the mother, will not Major Wharton prose cute his suit with the daughter without any such painful effort on my part?" And the answer was, "Perhaps so—perhaps not—a word from you would remove all doubt. Besides, in your foolish abandonment yesterday, may you not have betrayed your own infatuated hopes, and thus placed a new obstacle in his way?"

This last thought was decisive. He could not say it was not so; he could not live under the thought that it was. No; he was not the selfish being Allan seemed to think. If he was not quite so Quixotic as his counsels would have made him—if he would not do battle to windmills in Isabelle's cause, he would at least not plant thorns in her way.

The next morning, long before the sun had risen, William Clarke was on his way to Montrose Hall.

This early hour would enable him to avoid seeing Isabelle, and probably secure him a tête-à-tête with Major Wharton, without her suspicions being excited by it. He was fortunate, for Major Wharton, too, was abroad early. He had been excited almost as painfully as William himself, and even more variously. In a moment of uncontrollable passion, the secret, so carefully guarded for years, had been forced from him. He had expected no response; he had even supposed, when calm enough to think at all, that another, with far different emotions and under very different circumstances, had been at that very time pouring the like confession into the ears of her he loved; and yet, though thus prepared, the utter silence with which his avowal had been met by Mrs. Montrose struck coldly and painfully on his heart. Isabelle he had not even seen; her mother had apologized for her.

"It had been a day of great agitation," her mother said, "to her daughter, as well as to herself, and the young do not bear these things so well as the old—Isabelle had gone to bed quite indisposed."

Perhaps, thought Major Wharton, her mother has reported my mad outbreak, and she fears that I may intrude my unvalued professions on the pro-

mised bride of the boy William Clarke. Little did he dream that unconscious, wholly unconscious of the feelings with which young Clarke had sought and left her, Isabelle only avoided him because she felt that his first look would read her heart now that pride no longer guarded its secrets. Yet, with all his agitation, fatigue, and perhaps the calmer pulses of more matured life, had prevented Major Wharton from passing, like William, a sleepless night. He slept; but when awake, his spirit was too restless to permit him to play the sluggard, and rising in the early dawn, he went forth with some hope that, amidst the calmness of Nature, he should grow calm. He was on the road, far beyond the limits of the grounds surrounding the Hall, when he met William Clarke. The rencounter did not please him. Perhaps it would have been more than human not to feel somewhat coldly towards his boy rival; yet he mastered the feeling, or at least the manner it would have prompted, and even forced himself to smile as he said, "You are early at the Hall this morning."

"I am not going to the Hall, sir. I have attained the object of my ride in seeing you."

William replied very distantly, his face flushing half with shame and half with anger at the insinu-

ation in Major Wharton's words. He had dismounted while speaking, and stood with his bridle in his hand, and his arm resting on his horse's neck, opposite the Major, who stopped in his walk on learning that it was he whom William was seeking. There they stood, Major Wharton's calm, grave eyes fixed on William's face—William's bent upon the ground. The Major spoke first: "I think you said you wished to speak to me, Mr. Clarke; may I ask on what subject?"

"On the subject of the love you yesterday afternoon so strangely avowed," said William, abruptly, looking up, as he spoke, with an almost fierce determination in his eyes.

"Is the young fool going to quarrel with me for that?" thought Major Wharton; and drawing up his fine commanding figure to its utmost height, with a cold, and William thought a somewhat contemptuous expression, he uttered the simple words, "Well, sir."

"No, sir; it is not well," William angrily began; but with a quiet decision, more commanding than vehemence, Major Wharton interrupted him,—

"Stay, sir; permit me to say, that while I have no desire whatever to quarrel with you, and every respect for the legitimate rights of the position in which you stand, I do not recognize as one of

them the right to question me on a subject on which I have spoken but once, and that not willingly."

"And it is for that I blame you. Yes, sir, I say blame you; and will reproach you while I live, that for your fantastic notions of honour, which none but yourself can understand, and for which none but yourself care, you could inflict suffering on the heart you have not deserved to win. You may think to repair that suffering; but how will you make amends to me for the misery I endure—misery deep as the hopes which your silence fed were high?"

"Mr. Clarke," said Major Wharton in a more friendly manner, "one of us is labouring under a strange delusion—you are the last man on earth of whom, to-day, I should have thought in connection with that work misery."

"And I did not come to you to speak of myself: you are the last man to whom I should willingly give any personal confidence; I came to you to speak of one whose happiness is dearer to me than my own—so much dearer, that to promote it, I am willing to convict myself of folly—willing to inflict on myself the pang more bitter than death, of seeing her another's. And now, sir, you may despise me, if you please, when I tell you that the hopes I

entertained but yesterday, and which I was too happy to conceal, were founded on my own folly, and that it is you whom Isabelle Montrose loves."

William Clarke had prepared himself to see the kindling rapture which those words would bring to the eyes on which his own were fastened; but to his surprise they remained cold—though a faint glow tinged the usually pale cheek. There was something of irony in the tone with which Major Wharton asked, "And am I to understand that Miss Montrose made you the confidant of the feelings you impute to her?"

"No, sir; you are to understand nothing that can reflect in the slightest degree on her delicacy or her dignity." William spoke almost fiercely, yet Major Wharton seemed not displeased.

"And may I without offence," he asked gently, "inquire on what your opinion rests?"

"It is not opinion—it is certainty, or I should not have spoken as I have done this morning. I was with her yesterday afternoon; she heard you as well as I, and it needed no words to tell the feelings your words awakened—they were written too plainly on lip and cheek, and—no—no—I cannot speak of them and to you—to you who hear so coldly—"

But this last reproach was unjust, as William

Clarke thought himself as he looked up, after a moment's pause, and saw the flush that had risen to Major Wharton's brow and caught for an instant the strange light that shot from his eyes. William had scarcely time to mark these changes ere they were gone, and Major Wharton was calm and cold as ever. His words however were far from cold to William Clarke himself.

"Believe me," he said, "whatever may be the result of this morning's interview on my relations to others, I shall ever retain a most admiring remembrance of your share in it. I will hope yet to win the friendship of one capable of so generous, so noble a devotion."

"Your compliments are undeserved, sir," said William, little pleased in truth to receive them; "I have but performed a duty, and take some shame to myself in acknowledging that its first suggestion was caught from the words of another."

"Many a man can suggest what few can perform. Can you not carry your generosity so far as to accept my hand and to promise to think more kindly of one who, whatever may be his faults, has still sufficient nobility of nature to appreciate yours? So—you will not—well, I shall conquer you yet."

This was said as William, after a glance at his

proffered hand, turned away with denial in his face. In another instant, more manly feeling seemed to prevail over the passion of the boy, and he turned back and extended his hand. It was seized in a warm, eager clasp.

"I never asked a man twice for his friendship before," said Major Wharton—"Give me yours."

William raised his eyes slowly to Major Wharton's. He felt in that glance the influence of the true, earnest, tender yet commanding spirit, and answered: "I always honoured you, Major Wharton. Make her happy, and I shall love you."

"Remember—whatever come, you have a brother in me;" and thus the rivals parted.

William mounted his horse and galloped homewards, while Major Wharton retraced his steps to the Hall. Both were happier than when they met. With William the present was still sad; but the elastic spirit of youth was already beginning to feel that the present was not all, that there was a future. For Major Wharton—but we will follow him, and trace his feelings in his actions. He returned, from the point at which William had left him, to Montrose Hall, not with the slow, uncertain step with which he had come thither. He had walked then as if his only object had been to get rid of as much

time as possible in his course; now he walked with the light and rapid step of one to whom hope had lent wings. As he approached the house, his pace slackened and his countenance became somewhat clouded with anxiety. Doubt, in truth, did begin to creep into his mind and chill his resolves. He began to ask whether it were wise to yield thus unquestioningly to the imaginations of another, and that other under the influence of a passion proverbially unfavourable to just discrimination. But at once came the answer, that in one thing at least William Clarke must be correct: she had heard his avowal of love, others had heard it too; and it was due to her that she should have an opportunity of accepting or rejecting it. His eye had lost something of its fire, and his cheek of its glow, as these thoughts passed through his mind, and with a step subdued to its usual calm decision, he entered the house and proceeded at once to the library, intending to occupy himself with writing letters till he was summoned to breakfast.

The library door was open, and Major Wharton stood upon its threshold, yet he did not immediately enter, but stood gazing upon a vision which he knew a single moment would dispel. It was Isabelle, seated, not near a window, though never was beauty more tempting to the eye than that of this

spring morning, still in its early glow, but near the door leading to the room in which the scene with the usurer had occurred. Was that scene the subject of her thoughts? Was it that which had given such dreamy softness to her eye and lip, as she sat looking on empty air, one hand holding apart the leaves of a book that rested on her knee, the other hanging negligently at her side? But Major Wharton heard a step approaching, and entering the room, he closed the door behind him. Isabelle looked quickly up, their eyes met, and in an instant a crimson flush had risen to her very temples, and, flurried and agitated, she rose and was hurrying from the room, without according even the courtesy of a good morning to her guest, when Major Wharton intercepted her, saying, "May I not claim a how-do-you-do from you, after so long an absence?"

Isabelle tried to excuse herself: "Having seen him yesterday afternoon, she had forgotten they had not spoken;" then, as the recollection of how and where she had seen him rushed upon her, she sank into her chair, covered with confusion at her own *mal-adresse*, and not daring to look up to mark if he had perceived it. He also seated himself as if for conversation, yet he did not speak. The silence became oppressive, and Isabelle, though

hardly daring to trust her voice, felt she could endure it no longer, and, as the first thing that occurred to her, asked, "May we hope to see Donald soon?"

Her voice had been heard, and probably Donald's name, but very evidently nothing else, for the answer was, "Very well, when I left him."

She looked up, and the expression of surprise in her eyes probably aroused him, for he coloured slightly, and said, "I believe I answered very wide of the mark, for my thoughts were on a very different subject; shall I tell you what? or have you not already, with woman's intuition, read my heart? Do you not already know that I love you; not with the fickle fancy of a boy, but with the strong, unconquerable love of a man; that I have loved you thus for years—years that have proved powerless to break the spell that enthralled me? Need I tell you, that from the first hour we met, child, almost, as you were, yet realizing even then, in your proud air, and your frank, pure, generous heart, my dream of woman as she was when men vowed their lives to her service—need I tell you, that from that hour you obtained an empire over me that love only yields? When we met again, the woman more than fulfilled the promise of the girl. Again and again my heart's homage trembled

on my lips. Then there came a *friend*"—with what concentrated bitterness he pronounced the word—"a careful, prudent friend, who complimented my discretion, advertised the advantages—but no, I will not sully this hour by the memory of her cold and worldly precepts; it is enough to say, that she made me feel myself, my heart-offering, all unworthy of you; she made me see that I had rivals who were my superiors in fortune, my equals in all but love, and thus she made my very love an enemy to itself, bidding me stand aside, that you might receive a worthier homage. With what difficulty I obeyed—what a change from that moment passed over the spirit of my life—how youth and hope became to me, thenceforward, things of the past—I may not attempt now to tell you. I should not have said so much, had I not felt that, to judge me aright, you must know the motives of my past conduct. For the present, you know, at least I believe you do, what yesterday unsealed my lips; and now, Isabelle—I have only dared hitherto to call you so in my dreams—Isabelle, have I loved in vain?"

What she answered, or what farther was said by either, we know not; but when, nearly an hour after, Mrs. Montrose having vainly sought her daughter in her own room and in the usual sitting-

rooms, entered the library, they were still there, and Isabelle still looked as in a happy dream, and spoke like one in a dream, low and falteringly, so low, that though they were near enough for her hand to be clasped in Major Wharton's, and his arm to rest on the chair on which she sat, he was obliged to bend down to hear her.

On seeing her mother, Isabelle started from her seat, and would have withdrawn her hand, but Major Wharton held it fast, and drawing it through his arm, led her to Mrs. Montrose, and said simply, "Will you give her to me?"

"With my whole heart, and fulfil in doing so a wish long, but we feared vainly cherished, both by her father and myself," was the answer, as Mrs. Montrose pressed her lips to her daughter's brow, and Isabelle rested her blushing face for an instant on her mother's bosom.

"But how did all this come about, without my knowledge?" asked Mrs. Montrose, gaily; "was this a preconcerted meeting?"

"Oh no!" cried Isabelle, quickly, "I came here to—to read," her eye glancing at that moment on the book she still held, but which she now laid on the table beside her.

"A work on military engineering," said Major Wharton, quietly, as he turned over the leaves.

Isabelle snatched her hand from his arm, and hastened to the breakfast room, followed by her laughing mother, and by Wharton, who laughed with his eyes, though he kept his lips scrupulously closed.

On the details of that pleasant breakfast we will not linger, nor on the events of the day, of which little remains to be told. By an appointment made the previous evening, Uriah Goldwire appeared at ten o'clock. Mr. Symonds was already at Montrose Hall, and several other friends of the family, who did not know that the melo-drama of 'The Usurer' would have so speedy a termination. Isabelle availed herself of this opportunity to go to her school; but the lesson had not proceeded very far, when Agrippa appeared at the door, and doffing his straw hat, said, "Miss Isabelle, I thought maybe you'd like to be *reformed*, ma'am, that Mr. Goldwire *is* left, and all the *gentlemen* that was here is left too, ma'am." Agrippa would never have committed the blunder of calling Mr. Goldwire a gentleman.

It was true—Montrose Hall was redeemed, and the old family would still dwell under the roof-tree which had so long sheltered them. More important still, their people would remain under their care undisturbed; and this was through the suc-

cessful industry and noble generosity of a "Yankee manufacturer."

Mr. Dunbar spent the evening at Montrose Hall. He was a true pastor or shepherd of souls, and in the twilight as Mrs. Montrose sat with him in the piazza, and looked with a softness he had not seen upon her face for many long months, on Isabelle and Major Wharton, who were strolling arm in arm, down to the river's side, he seized the opportunity to speak gently but firmly of her obligations to Him who had delivered her from all her fears, and had so eminently, in her case, in the midst of judgment remembered mercy. And the proud heart, which sorrow could not bend, was touched in some slight degree by the goodness of Heaven, and silently asked, what can I present as a thank-offering to the Giver of all this good, and a voice within her murmured, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice," and by a connection which the reader may perhaps perceive, she asked of Mr. Dunbar, "Have you heard from Alice lately?"

"Not for more than two months; I am afraid they will suffer from this suspension of the United States Bank."

The lady said nothing, but while she mused, there was a fire burning within. Let it burn if it also purify.

"And must I say good bye, as well as good night?" said Mr. Dunbar regretfully, as he shook the Major's hand, at parting.

"Oh! I hope to see you again before I go," said Major Wharton, a little hesitatingly.

"But did I not understand you to say yesterday, that it was impossible for you to remain here longer than to-day?"

"I think it very probable," said Major Wharton, "but—" he was hurriedly endeavouring to find some specious excuse for a change so sudden, when the hearing of a laugh from Mrs. Montrose and the detection of a smile on Isabelle's face determined him, and he continued with admirable gravity, "Miss Montrose commenced a course of study on Military Engineering this morning, and I must stay a little longer to give her lessons."

"Fairly turned," cried Mrs. Montrose.

"Military Engineering! that is a very strange study for you, my dear," said Mr. Dunbar, addressing Isabelle; but she had made her escape, and the good clergyman went home thoroughly mystified, and determined to have a good talk with Major Wharton about the impropriety of such soldierly training for the mind of a young woman, the next day, when the Major had promised to call on him.

CHAPTER II.

"Here, if thou stay, thou canst not see thy love.
Hope is the lover's staff; walk hence with that,
And manage it against despairing thoughts."

"He must be told of it and he shall; the office
Becomes a woman best; I'll take it upon me;
If I prove honey-mouthed, let my tongue blister!"

ROBERT GRAHAME had travelled much, as we have said, and he had found much in travel to charm. He had passed over some lands for which nature had done as much as for his own, over many for which art had done more. He had found much to interest, much to instruct. France, with its social refinements, where the *savoir vivre* seemed carried to its utmost possibility of perfection; Germany, where the mind travels the circle of science, while the heart remains in the simplicity of childhood; Italy, with its sunny skies, and its artistic life, where in the ever young and ever beautiful ideal, one well nigh forgets the hideous realities of crime and suffering by which he is surrounded; Greece, beautiful Greece, from which Italy had its art and Germany its philosophy; and last and

noblest, England, sturdy England, whose green old age no decay has yet touched, still maintaining the homely virtues, and the constitutional freedom she has trausmitted to her children; yes, everywhere he found cause for admiration, for interest, and still

"His heart untravelled, fondly turned to home."

Robert Grahame was, as he had said, an American. His whole nature had been cast by the circumstances of his life in an American mould, and had grown rigid there. He instituted no comparisons between his own and other countries; he saw, and was willing to admit their superiority in many things, but *they were*, and America *was to be*. America was the land of hope, of promise. The matured man excels in many things the youth; but have all his attainments equalled the youth's imaginings? America is to her children what they see she may become. Robert Grahame remembered that on her children themselves depended the making their glorious vision a reality, and he was impatient to do his part of the work. As soon therefore as the blusterings of March subsided into the gentler breezes of April, in the second year of his absence, he determined to take passage with his sister from Liverpool for Boston. For this pur-

pose they left Rome, where they had passed the winter, in the latter part of March. On the 23rd of that month he was at Marseilles. Mary was fatigued and retired to bed early. He was restless. His thoughts had travelled faster than he himself had done. They were already at home, in America at least; they were pursuing a route that must not be indulged, and he must find them other employment—he would look over the book in which visitors at the hotel registered their names, it might be that he should find some acquaintance there. The book was brought to him, he cast his eye on it, and there, in the very latest name the ink with which it was written scarcely dry, he read, "Charles Montrose, U. S. N." Was this the brother of Alice, the brother long lost and mourned as dead? It was a question too interesting to be left long unanswered when the answer lay so near him. He rang for a waiter, and on his appearance, ascertained that Lieutenant Montrose was in the house, but had retired to his room. Should he disturb him? He should have to introduce himself to him. Still, if Lieutenant Montrose had not lately communicated with home, and it was probable he had not, as a recent letter from Donald had mentioned him with poignant regret as one of whose safety no hope could now be entertained, he

had much information to give him, which he must desire, though he might not rejoice to receive. Acting under the influence of such thoughts, he sent his card to Lieutenant Montrose, with the following lines pencilled upon it. "Mr. Grahame, of Springfield, Massachusetts, will be very happy to see Lieutenant Montrose. Mr. G. would not disturb Lieutenant M. to night, but expects to leave Marseilles at a very early hour to-morrow morning, and thinks that he can probably give Lieutenant M. later intelligence of his family than he has himself received. Mr. G. has a letter of very late date from D. Montrose, of Montrose Hall, Geo."

The card was sent, and Robert Grahame walked the floor of the saloon in almost painful expectation. What was it to him, it may be asked, whether Charles Montrose lived or died? We answer, it was much to one he loved with a true and therefore a sympathizing affection. He had but a few minutes to wait before the waiter returned, ushering into the room a tall and graceful young man, with an expressive, intelligent face, bronzed by sun and wind to a hue dark as an Indian's.

"Do I speak to Lieutenant Charles Montrose, formerly of Montrose Hall?" asked Robert Grahame, advancing.

"The same, sir, and I, I presume, to Donald's kind Springfield friend. Your name, sir," he continued, after a warm shake of the hand, "called up a host of recollections, which shipwreck and illness had suspended for a while, though they could not efface them. I have not heard one word from home, sir, since I sailed, nearly two and a half years ago, and you tell me you have late intelligence from Donald. I want to ask a thousand questions in one, but since that is impossible, pray tell me how they are—all of them?"

"Your mother and sister were quite well when Donald heard from them."

"When he heard from them—why, where were they? but perhaps Donald was absent on service."

"He was—and they were in or near Boston—but sit down, Lieutenant Montrose, I have much to tell you."

Charles threw himself hastily into a chair and said, "Pray, tell me first, sir, if you know what took my mother and sister to Boston in the winter? for I presume this letter of Donald's was written in the winter."

"It was; but your mother and sister have been there more than a year."

"And why, sir? and why?" he asked sharply.

"There have been great changes at Montrose

Hall since you were there—the good old Colonel—" Robert Grahame's voice had become low and sad—he paused before he added—"Donald is master there now."

Charles Montrose did not utter a sound or make a movement—he sat fixed in the attitude in which he had heard the announcement of his uncle's death for what seemed a long time to Robert Grahame, and then again commenced his questioning, though in a tone which had lost its eager, animated expression.

"And is the Hall shut up, sir?"

"No: Mrs. Colonel Montrose and her daughter reside there. Donald is at present stationed in Florida, where he has had some active service for a year or two past in consequence of disturbances among the Seminole Indians."

They were both silent for some minutes, and then Charles Montrose said, "I do not yet quite understand why my mother and sister should have left the Hall; in truth—perhaps, sir, from your intimacy with Donald you may be aware that I had some reason to expect—that is, that Donald and my sister were engaged, and though my uncle's death might have postponed—but I may be mistaken—are they married, sir?"

"They are not," was the laconic reply.

"And can you tell me why not?"

"I cannot—there were some entanglements of debt on Donald's part, but they are removed."

"Does he not speak of her to you?"

"Never—except in answer to a question from my sister he informed me they were well when he heard from them."

Charles Montrose was silent again—a silence which his companion seemed not disposed to break. When he did speak, it was to ask a question which showed that his thoughts were still circling around the same centre.

"You spoke of entanglements of debt, sir?" he said. "I know your intimacy with Donald, or I should not have spoken to you with such freedom of family affairs—perhaps you may be able to tell me if these were gambling debts?"

"I believe Donald has gambled but once in his life," was the reply—and then after a moment's pause—"I know this does not sound quite frank, and yet I am not sure that it would not be wiser in me to leave Donald to make what communications he may choose in relation to his own difficulties—"

"Remember, sir, how long I have been absent—how anxious—remember too, that Donald and I were and ever must be as brothers—were he here

I should know all—I have certainly a right to all that you can tell."

"I believe I know all respecting your cousin's pecuniary difficulties. He had given notes for the sums lost in gambling. These notes all passed into the hands of young Browne—George Browne—of Boston, and from his into his father's. When they were presented they had been altered so artfully as to escape detection, and so boldly that Donald was glad to compromise the amount claimed for fifty thousand dollars."

"Fifty thousand dollars!"

"Which, of course, it gave him some difficulty to pay immediately. It has been done, however, by a mortgage on the whole property; Mrs. Colonel Montrose and her daughter joining with Donald in the arrangement. The loan was made on terms which could not, I think, have interfered with your cousin's fulfilment of the engagement, of which you spoke just now."

"George Browne is also my cousin, I am sorry to say. I have seen but little of him, however, and that little has not made me desirous of seeing more. I had not a very exalted opinion of him when I left the United States; but I have since become acquainted with circumstances which stamp him as a deeper villain than I supposed him to be."

"May I turn questioner now," said Robert Grahame, "and ask why your friends have been left so long without hearing from you? It has given them great uneasiness, and Donald, at least, when I last heard from him, seemed to have despaired altogether of ever seeing you again."

"I supposed this must be the case, especially after the return of my ship without me."

"Your ship! Your ship had not returned, nor had it been heard from when I left the United States a little more than a year ago."

"Is it possible? Then my poor fellows and I may have been saved by the very means that threatened our destruction. You know our ship was bound for the Pacific. We had understood that we would touch at Rio; but, for what reason I know not, though we had encountered very severe weather, and most of us longed for a little rest before we reached the latitude of Rio, we held on our course for the Cape. Cape Horn has a bad name, you know, with sailors, and it certainly proved itself deserving of that name as long as we were in its neighbourhood; our course was through incessant tempests. We had not taken an observation for several days, the sun being constantly obscured by clouds; but we supposed ourselves, reckoning by the log, and judging also by the ap-

pearance of the sea around us, to be about the latitude of the southern part of Chili, and well to the west in longitude, when, in the middle night-watch, there was a cry of 'Man overboard!' The last watch had been mine, and I had not yet turned in; orders were given to lower a boat, and before she touched the sea I and six trusty men were in her. The wind was fresh, though no longer a gale, the ship under considerable canvas, and we were soon left far behind; we never saw her more. One of the men with me thought he heard an order to us to come alongside given through the trumpet; but I heard only the occasional cry of our lost comrade rising above winds and waves—*that* I heard perhaps in fancy long after it had been hushed in death, and in almost mad excitement followed it. Bitterly did I blame myself for this boyish abandonment, when I began to think of return. The night was thick; we had no glass; in vain we swept the seas on every side with the glance of men whose lives were in their eyes; everywhere we saw but sea and sky. At length, one man declared he saw a light, I steered in the direction indicated by him; it was probably wrong, for when daylight came, there was no ship, no land in sight, only sea and sky. By what seemed the merest accident, in which the thoughts of that

solemn moment made me recognise a good Providence, I had in my pocket a little pocket-compass, a present from my uncle; this saved me from utter despair, and enabled me to support the spirits of my men. I hoped we were not very far from land, as I conjectured that we had been steering nearly east through the night; I knew, too, that there were many islands in this region of the Pacific, some inhabited by savages, and some not inhabited at all. The last of those, though it should give us only roots and water, would be better than the sea. I determined to continue steering east, and to make the first land I saw, whether island or mainland. Believe me, Mr. Grahame, if a man never prayed before, he will pray when he finds himself thus on a lonely sea, isolated from all the human race but a few helpless, miserable men, whom he has brought there. Oh! how I blessed my mother at that moment for having taught me to pray! There was but one anchor for my soul then—faith in one Almighty and Benevolent Power!"

Charles Montrose paused, and the awed expression of his face seemed to say he was even then communing with that Power. His companion was too deeply interested to bear the silence long.

"And how long were you in this condition?" he asked.

"Not long," he answered, "not long in reality, though it seemed an eternity,—for hours, under such circumstances, expand into years. We were already beginning to know something of the pangs of hunger, and yet more of thirst, when we made one of those lonely islands, rising a mere rock in the sea, yet not destitute of vegetation, its thin soil being fertilized by the birds which abound in those seas. We landed, and our first search was for water; we found it, and with *terra firma* beneath our feet, and water, and, as far as we could see, berries and roots for our only meat and drink, we knelt down and thanked God for life preserved: how many, with more than this, have murmured, and been ready to cast it from them as a painful burden. There was still light enough to seek for some kind of food, and weak and weary as we were, we set out in parties of two to explore the little island. We were to halloo to each other occasionally, and I had not proceeded far before my shout was answered, not by my own men only, but by another and weaker cry a short distance ahead. I hastened in the direction indicated, and found, to my surprise, as you may readily believe, that we were not the only persons on the island. There lay a man wrapped in a blanket, who had raised himself on his elbow, and was gazing forward in wild expecta-

tion, excited by my cry, doubtless, when I came in sight. He looked pale and ill, and, as he afterwards told me, had laid down there to die, under the influence of utter hopelessness, when our voices roused him, and our coming inspired him with hope and brought him back from the gates of the grave. Not less fortunate was the rencounter to us than to him. He had not been cast here by shipwreck, nor had he sought refuge here, like ourselves, from an unfriendly sea, but he had been brought and left here by his fellow men. His account was, that he had sailed from Boston in a very fast sailing Portuguese ship from Valparaiso, induced, as he afterwards told me, by George Browne, who gave him letters to houses of note in Valparaiso, from which he promised him very profitable results. He believes now that the letters were a sham, and that the whole thing was arranged by Browne to get rid of him, fearing his interference with some scheme which he suspected, but which he would never fully explain to me."

"Did you learn his name?" cried Robert Grahame, who looked flushed and eager.

"He called himself Richards, but I doubt if that were his name, for, to speak truth, I am disposed to think that my island acquaintance had some special reason for leaving the United States, which

had made him fall an easy prey to George Browne's seductions. However that may be, the meeting with him was, as I have said, most fortunate for us, for over him was spread a large tarpaulin, made fast to the branches of trees, and under its shelter was a barrel of biscuit, a keg of powder, a bag of small shot, and a fowling-piece. How he or they came here he knew not; his belief was, that he had been drugged with a narcotic on approaching the island, with which the captain was probably acquainted, as we afterwards found that it lay very nearly in the course of the Peruvians, when resorting to a group of rocks in the midst of the ocean, from which they obtain a fertilizing deposit for manuring their soil. In his drugged and death-like sleep he had probably been taken on shore, and left as we found him; when he awoke, there was no ship in sight. We were none of us, I fear, as ingenious as Robinson Crusoe, and his stores saved our lives, I believe, as our company and the hope it brought doubtless saved his. To make a story short in telling, which was very, very long in action, we were on the island together for nearly a year, making about twenty months from the time we had sailed from Boston, when a little sloop, manned with Peruvians and Indians, passing near the island, in going for the manure of which I have spoken,

saw the signal we kept ever flying, though with little hope, and landed. They reported a French ship, as lying at an island about twelve miles to the north-west, taking in water. Thanks to my Spanish, of which I thought rather slightingly before, I was able to communicate with them, and by the offer of my watch and the little gold in my purse, I prevailed on them to take us to the island of which they spoke. The ship was still there, but it was one of the French Discovery ships; it would be nearly a year in the South Sea, to which it was directing its course, and we might have no opportunity, in all that time, to communicate with home. This was vexatious; but with us, who were sailors, it produced no indecision. With our Boston friend it was otherwise; he longed for *terra firma*, and the Peruvians, promising for a moderate sum to take him to Valparaiso, the French officers, who entered warmly into our service, made it up for him, and we parted company. I should not wonder if he tried to reach the United States by land, poor fellow. We experienced the most generous kindness from our French hosts; my men shipped with them for the cruise, and were regularly paid. For me, they clothed me, fed me, supplied all my wants, and, having met no ship in our cruise that would put me homewards, I was brought in to-day

to Marseilles by them. To-morrow I hope to pay the moneyed part of my debt to them, with the aid of our Consul, and then for home, with a glad and a grateful heart."

"Pray do not wait to see the consul; you may be kept two or three days before he goes through the slow forms of his official action; let me be your banker. I have not a very large amount in money with me, but I have letters of credit on Paris and London with which I can probably command, without any delay, what you want, and you can have paid your debt and taken leave of your friends, and be many miles on your way homewards before the consul's office is opened to-morrow."

"Thank you, thank you; I accept your kind offer gladly; for, now that my face is actually turned towards home, every hour's delay is maddening."

"I, too, am impatient to be there, and we will travel as rapidly as winds and waves will permit us. My sister, who is with me, is a good traveller, and will not delay us. By the by, having mentioned my sister, may I ask you, if you should narrate your interesting adventures to her, not to mention George Browne, or Boston, in connection with your island acquaintance. You look surprised, but I will be frank with you, as you have been with me.

We had a friend"—he coloured, hesitated a moment, and then, with evident effort, corrected himself—"a brother, who went out to South America at the recommendation of George Browne, and under somewhat such relations to him as your acquaintance described, and for whom she has sorrowed as dead. Your account might awaken painful speculations."

"I understand you, and I will be guarded."

Travel has lost its romance in losing its perils. Once it gave exercise to the heroic qualities; now, only to their meek sister, patience. Even for patience our travellers had not much need; for though in Marseilles on the 23rd of March, the 30th of April saw them in Boston harbour. How eagerly Charles Montrose eyed the shore! In a few hours he should be beside his loved ones. His delicate mother, his gentle, clinging Alice; how had they borne this contact with the rude world without the shelter and support of stronger arms and braver hearts? It had been agreed that Robert Grahame should ascertain the present residence of his mother, and announce his safety and his arrival before he should himself appear; for Mary Grahame had suggested that, to see him suddenly, without such preparation, would give a terrible shock to delicate nerves.

One part of Robert Grahame's task, that of ascertaining the present residence of Mrs. and Miss Montrose, was easily performed; for Mr. Gaston, with whom he had corresponded while abroad, and who knew the ship in which he expected to sail, was on the dock waiting to receive him.

"Welcome home again," cried Mr. Gaston, as he extended one hand to Mary and the other to her brother. "This way, Miss Grahame; here is your little friend Ellen—no longer little, by the by—waiting in a carriage to take you home; your brother and I will follow by and by. You must stay with us a few days."

"You are very kind," Mary began.

"To ourselves—yes—"

"Before I even talk of my own arrangements, I have a friend here to introduce to you," said Robert Grahame, looking back for Charles Montrose, who had fallen behind on the approach and greeting of Mr. Gaston. "Permit me to introduce to you my friend, Lieutenant Montrose. Mr. Gaston, Lieutenant Montrose."

"Lieutenant Montrose, of the army?" asked Mr. Gaston.

"No, sir; of the navy," said Charles.

"Of the navy? the brother of my pretty Alice; the son of my old friend, Mrs. Charles Montrose; can it be?"

"It is, sir, the same; and you can tell me of my mother and sister; where are they?"

"At Cambridge, where they have resided for more than a year. I saw them yesterday; Alice is well, and your mother will, I hope, be well now; her indisposition has been from anxiety, Dr. J. thinks, more than from any physical cause. But where have you been, and what has become of your ship?"

"I have been in an open boat on the wide Pacific; on an uninhabited rock in its midst for a year; and last of all, cruising about in a French discovery ship nearer the South Pole than I ever care to go again, and then in the same ship to Marseilles, where I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. and Miss Grahame. For your other question, sir, I cannot answer it; I fear it is among the secrets of the sea, that will be told only in eternity."

The silence that succeeded was unbroken till they reached the carriage; then came fresh greetings and fresh introductions; and Mr. Gaston had quickly arranged their course of procedure.

"Come, Mr. Grahame, the ladies will give you a seat in the carriage; I will take the reins, and leave William"—the coachman—"to look after your baggage. Lieutenant Montrose, will you sit beside me? You will have much to hear, and I to

tell; and after we set the ladies down, I will drive you and Mr. Grahame to Cambridge."

So William had an order for the baggage, as soon as the custom-house officer, who had it in charge already, should deliver it; and as they drove to Summer-street, Charles learned all that Mr. Gaston had to tell respecting his mother and sister, except, indeed, that gentleman's own friendly acts. There was much which deeply touched him in the recital; much which surprised. Cato's devotion to his loved ones brought a choking sensation to his throat, and tears to his eyes; but Alice, he could not recognise her in the picture sketched by Mr. Gaston. The Alice of his memory was a child, sportive and tender, a creature to be loved and caressed, but who, in the practical business of life, would be worse than useless, except as the love she inspired should lend a new impulse to man's exertion. The Alice whom Mr. Gaston described was gentle, it is true, but firm in principle and decided in action; simple as a child, because she had a child's guilelessness, yet seeing with the quickness of an intuition where the right lay, and pursuing it steadily, whatsoever trials obstructed the way.

"She is not self-dependent," said Mr. Gaston; "she never shocks one's notions of proportion by

standing up with her slender, womanly body, and challenging man to combat, but with a meek, gentle dignity, before which every man with a man's soul in him is ready to do homage, as the nearest approach to the purely spiritual which our earth contains, she seems to say, 'Though weak in myself, I am strong in Him, who, having allotted my work, will give me power to perform it.' I said that she was simple," said Mr. Gaston again, "and there is one sense in which she will always remain so; but she is every day acquiring that practical wisdom necessary to the successful prosecution of business. My first acquaintance with Alice arose from her coming to me with the ingenuousness, and much of the timidity of a child, to tell me, that in consequence of the failure or suspension of the United States Bank, they would not any longer be able to pay the rent of the small cottage in Cambridge, in which they live, and that she felt, therefore, it would not be honest in them to continue there any longer, unless, from my knowledge of the affairs of the Bank, I was willing to trust to the prospect of such a retrieval of those affairs as would enable them to sell their Bank stock advantageously, when she promised me, what per centage do you think, on my money?"

The ladies having been set down in Summer-

street, and Charles Montrose having entered the carriage, lest he should be discovered by his mother and sister before they were prepared to receive him, Mr. Gaston, still holding the reins, sat so as to converse with his friends within the carriage, and had addressed the question to them both. There was a merry twinkle in his eyes which prepared them for something preposterous, and as Charles did not attempt to speak, Robert Grahame, though fearing a little to trust his voice, lest it should prove a tell-tale of emotions he would gladly conceal, said, "Fifty per cent.?"

"Double it—cent. per cent.," said Mr. Gaston, with a merry shout, in which even Charles, with his moist eyes, joined.

"For what time was this offered?" asked Robert Grahame, the smile still on his lips.

"For no specified time," said Mr. Gaston, and again the laughter broke forth. "But now, mark the difference," resumed Mr. Gaston; "this was but three months ago, and yesterday Alice called to see me again. It was to say, that as far as she could ascertain, from questioning her uncle, there appeared little prospect of their stock ever selling for more than half its value; that the small sum thus obtained ought, she thought, to be kept sacred to her mother's use; and that she was

therefore desirous to do what she could for her own support, and for the payment of such debts as they had already contracted; that she would be glad to obtain a few pupils in music, if I would recommend her to my friends; and as she had understood from Ellen that I was intending to offer fifty dollars a quarter to a lady who should give two hours, three times a week, to superintend my idle daughter's practice of the music lessons received from her master, she would be very glad, if I thought her competent, to pay her house rent in this way. To this plain, sensible proposal, I had nothing to object, except that it would make it necessary to break through the secrecy she had hitherto observed to her mother, in relation to their embarrassments. To this she answered, that she found she could not be just to others without confiding in her mother, to a certain extent, and that therefore, though grieved to give her pain, she had been compelled to tell her enough of their altered circumstances to win her consent to her present plans. "She knows," she added, "that I have been embroidering for some time, for a shop in Boston, and it has helped us very much, but it could not do all I wanted."

And so to this our petted Alice had risen—the tender nurse, the careful housekeeper, the indus-

trious worker. All Mr. Gaston had told of her plans was true; but he had not told, for he did not know, all. We have spoken of the garden to the little cottage at Cambridge. Here Alice had found amusement, and the exercise necessary to health. It had lately occurred to her that a further profit might be made from it — that it might bring money too. She had seen frequently, in the market-carts passing to Boston, bouquets of common garden flowers. She found, on inquiring, that they sold for a few pence in the city markets. Acting on the suggestion, she collected the early spring flowers, and arranged them in tasteful bouquets, which Cato carried to town every morning for her, and sold to a market-woman at a rate which enabled the woman to make some profit on them. Cato reported that there was quite a premium offered on her flowers on account of the greater taste in their arrangement; and Alice determined, as the season for flowers advanced, to devote to this traffic her roses and carnations, mignonettes, and geraniums. which had been cultivated hitherto only for her mother's delight and her own.

On this very last day of April, Alice had risen at early dawn — at five o'clock. An hour had been occupied with her toilette, for in that she could

not lay aside the habits of her earlier life—poverty and trial had not made her less neat in person; nor less carefully studious of the counsels of good taste in dress—even in the arrangement of the simple and inexpensive dress in which she worked there was something coquettish and pretty. At six, then, Alice appeared in the parlour, where, by Cato's care, a cheerful fire was already burning; for even on the last day of April the morning was chilly, and an invalid like Mrs. Montrose must have a fire. Alice did not need it; for waiting only to put on her warm wadded spencer, tie a pretty little worsted hood over her head, draw on her gloves and get her garden scissors and basket, she was out among her flowers. Half an hour after, she came back, less pale than when she went, and with a more animated expression in her eyes.

"See, daddy Cato," she cried, as she met him on entering the house again; "see how lucky I am this morning. I am so glad I brought those white and yellow jonquils from Georgia—they will make quite a show in my bouquets; and then, you see, I have some roses from my garden this morning, as well as those pretty ones I am nursing in the house."

"Dem bery purty, Missis; but I wish you been hab some jessamine, and some bay blossom,

and some red bud—ouw! dem da de purty flowers."

By half-past seven o'clock, Alice had six pretty bouquets arranged. They had given pleasant employment to her morning hours, and each of them would bring in market six and a quarter cents—at which rate her flowers would be worth to her nearly two dollars a week. But flowers need some labour, and even now Alice wanted a bed hoed for planting with summer flowers, and feared she could not spare time to do it and finish her embroidery on the promised day. She mentioned this, and Cato, dear, helpful Cato, had a remedy.

"Enty, I can come home little sooner dis ebenin', and do 'em."

At half-past seven, Alice made the coffee, for her mother had been too long accustomed to drink that delightful beverage in a Southern home to be satisfied with it as it would come from the hands of their cook; then she brushed up the fragments of her flowers, put everything in the neatest order in the little parlour, and spread the breakfast table. It was now eight o'clock, and a few little things were to be done for her mother before she would be ready for her breakfast. Breakfast over and the parlour cleaned, her embroidery occupied Alice until half-past nine o'clock, when she rose to pre-

pare for going to Boston. To-day, she begins her care of Miss Gaston's music. Her mother knows whither she is going, and with all a mother's fond weakness at her heart, she cannot repress the tears that rise to her eyes. In an instant, Alice is on her knees beside the couch, caressing her mother, as she says: "Darling, darling mother, do not look sad or you will take all the courage out of my heart, and the strength out of my hands. If you only knew how I enjoyed the thought of working for you; but if my work makes you sad, I am done."

The last few words were in a tone of the utmost despondency, and Mrs. Montrose forced herself to smile and to say, as she smoothed back the hair from the white forehead of Alice and pressed her lips to it: "Did you never hear of tears of joy and gratitude, my pet—and do you think I am not both joyful and grateful that Heaven has given me such a child?" And Alice is restored to animation again.

At half-past ten she was in Summer-street. At half-past twelve, the two hours' practice completed, she was preparing to return home; and though Ellen Gaston kissed, and caressed, and coaxed, she would not delay, for she was sure her mother would need her. As she had to stop at the embroidery shop in —— street, she would walk thither and take

the stage there, or beyond, if it did not pass while she was there. Accordingly she walked on with light step, and light heart too, for she was full of hope; it is thus we ever enter the battle of life. She remembered the girlish wish that she had been left in such circumstances that she would have had to work for her mother and Charles, and as she did, there arose in her mind a vision of Robert Grahame, of the searching glance he had given her, and then of the cold, the *half contemptuous* manner she had thought it, with which he bade her be thankful that no such necessity existed; but she did not fail to recall too, his expression when he added that beauty had its uses, and a smile followed the sigh which her first thought had created. Her business at the shop was to select some silk of a shade needed in her work which Mrs. Martin had overlooked. It did not detain her long, and as the Cambridge stage was not in sight, she walked slowly on. She had passed one block, and turned the corner into another street, when she was accosted by Mrs. Martin's invalid lodger, who had followed her—"Do I speak to Miss Montrose, of Montrose Hall?" he asked, raising his hat respectfully as he spoke.

"To the niece of Colonel Montrose, sir," said Alice with surprise, as glancing at him she saw the

face of a stranger, and yet one that seemed to have in it something that was familiar—still it was a stranger, and she added, "I believe, sir, I have not the pleasure of your acquaintance," and would have passed on, but he exclaimed, "I entreat you to hear me, Miss Montrose, it is of the interests of those nearest and dearest to you I would speak."

A coquette under such circumstances would have made a difficulty of granting his request, and yet, in the end, have assented—a discreet woman who knew something more of the world than Alice would not have listened to him at all, but Alice was a child—what knew she of the evil of the world?—she thought at present only of the interests of those to whom the stranger had alluded, and she stayed.

"Will you tell me where Lieutenant Donald Montrose is at present?" was the first question of the stranger.

"In Florida with his regiment."

"Has he not had some pecuniary entanglement?" Alice hesitated. "Do not be afraid to answer me. I know more of those difficulties than you do; more perhaps than he does himself. I may do him important service if you are perfectly frank with me. I want to know what was the amount which George Browne claimed from him on his father's death."

"Sixty-five thousand dollars, sir, which my uncle Browne, to whom his son had given the notes, compromised for fifty thousand: excuse me, sir, but I hear the Cambridge stage, and I cannot stay longer; my mother would be uneasy—indeed I must go, sir," as he made a gesture to detain her.

"Then tell me when and where I can see you again."

"I shall be happy to see you, and so will my mother, sir, at Cambridge."

"That is impossible. I dare not go so far; it was imprudent even to come here. I lodge at Mrs. Martin's; can you not see me there? I will only ask to speak to you in the parlour, out of her hearing, though not out of her sight, as she sits in the shop. I can do nothing without hearing more; will you not do so much for your uncle's family?"

"I would do anything for them that was right, and I will do this if my mother is willing."

"Your mother! no; I can trust no third person—and she the aunt of George Browne, too."

"But she never sees him," said Alice.

"I don't care—my life is at stake. I will trust no third person. I will give it all up. I will do nothing. Why should I care so much for them as to risk my life for them when you will risk nothing?"

"Oh, sir, I will do anything—risk anything for them."

"Come, then, as soon as you can, and remember life hangs on your silence," he said, as the stage drew up, and Alice stepped in and was driven off. She noticed that he carefully averted his face from the stage, and when she looked back for him he had disappeared.

As the stage rolled on, the thoughts of Alice were drawn even from this strange interview by the number of unusually large and showy placards which were pasted on every wall, or post, that could possibly be appropriated to such a purpose. They all contained an urgent invitation to the inhabitants of Boston and Cambridge to attend a lecture, to be delivered that afternoon at four o'clock at the lecture-room of the —— church, Cambridge. The placard concluded thus: "To all who have compassion on the three millions of our fellow men held in cruel bondage in our own country; to all who are friends of freedom and enemies of oppression; to all who hold that it is right to obey God rather than man, this call is addressed. The popular lecturer, Mr. Sampson, is expected to address the meeting, having information to communicate of the most interesting and exciting character."

Now the heart of Alice was one which sympathized with every generous and benevolent movement, and she had often dreamed of a time when every man, of whatever race, or name, or colour, should stand up a freeman; free not from outward pressure only, but free, too, from the bonds which enslave the soul—from ignorance and superstition—from sensuality and sloth—when the rule of righteousness over the earth should make all other rule needless, and Christ should be acknowledged the King—the only King—as He is the Lord of the whole earth. She had done more than dream of this—she had hoped for it and believed in it. It was this hope, this faith, that had prompted her plantation school, and cheered her in it amid many discouragements. And still she hoped and believed, and would have laboured for such a consummation—yet, as she read this placard and thought of the debasing ignorance, the cruel superstitions, the worse than brutish barbarities to which the African race had been subjected in their own land; as she remembered the accounts given to her by those who were old enough to recollect these people as they might have been seen amongst us before the abolition of the slave-trade, when their brutish physiognomies and loathsome habits might well have made us doubt their right to the

name of MAN, and when she recalled their descendants as she had seen them, decent, often pleasing in appearance, taught at least to recognize in themselves the intelligent, accountable children of the Universal Father, treated often as the trusted stewards and humble friends of their proprietors rather than their slaves; as she recalled the homes in which she had so often sat beside them, reading the precepts and promises of that blessed book by which many of them ruled their lives, and which had cheered and comforted many in their death hour—as, after thirteen years of a plantation life, she searched in vain the tablets of her memory for the sound of rattling chain or sounding lash; or for the sight of scar or brand, or mutilation, or any other of those thousand acts of tyrannical power which it sickens the very soul to recal. and of which every northern paper she perused was full, her lip curled with contempt at the "cruel bondage," and she was ready to forget the real evils, both to the superior and inferior, which must ever wait on great* power, in her indignation at the audacity of falsehood. Then she thought of her uncle's death-bed and its dark line of mourners, of daddy Cato and his unselfish kindness, and tears

* We say not "irresponsible," for that the masters are not.

filled her eyes and gratitude swelled her heart, and every harsher feeling vanished and was forgotten.

The arrival of Alice was the signal for dinner at the cottage, and as, with animated looks and tones, she recounted the little incidents of the morning, Mrs. Montrose felt that perhaps, after all, it might not prove so very sad an affair that she had to give music lessons. About 3 o'clock, Cato came back from Boston to hoe the bed for her, and do some other things about the garden which he had seen to be wanted. Alice was with him for a little while after dinner, and then she seated herself in earnest to her embroidery. Mrs. Montrose sat up in an easy chair, and occupied herself with some plain sewing until about 5 o'clock, when, according to her now daily custom, she lay down on a couch in her own room, which was at the back of the house, looking into the garden. An hour's rest, and perhaps half an hour's sleep on this couch, enabled her to sit up for some time in the evening, and she could not leave Alice quite alone in those long, dreary evening hours, when she sat working at her embroidery. Ah! if she had only known how busy fancy was in those silent hours! They were not lonely, though they might have been often sad.

After seeing her mother on her couch, arranging her pillows, drawing a soft, warm shawl around her

shoulders, and tenderly pressing her lips to her pale cheek, while she wished her a pleasant nap, Alice returned to the front room to avail herself of the remaining light for her work. As she entered the room, her ear was struck by the continuous sound of steps and murmur of voices; with some curiosity, she approached the window, and drew aside the plain linen screen. What could it mean! An excited mob was assembling about the cottage —yes, there could be no doubt that was their object, for some of them are entering the little court-yard. Before we narrate what followed, let us see what was the occasion of the throng.

The placards had been successful; for who ever made an appeal to the American people, in the name of liberty, and were disappointed? The lecture-room was crowded with men and women, and there were many without, who could not gain admission, but who remained to listen to the reports of the more fortunate *insiders*, and to sustain their action, if it were a case in which it were possible to act. On the platform appropriated to speakers, sat Mr. Sampson, in more than usual sorrowful majesty of mien; for he was more than usually assured of his possession of those elements by which he could kindle the popular enthusiasm, rule the popular will, and win for himself the

notoriety he insanely craved. On either side of him sat—start not, reader—a woman. It is true the era of Bloomers and Women's Rights Conventions had not yet blazed upon us in its full glory, but the dawn had come—women were beginning to feel the injustice of the destiny which had consigned them to lives of inglorious ease, denying to them the victor's laurel and the statesman's palm. Already they were beginning to suspect that Jacob, when he placed Rachel and Leah, Billah, and Zilpah, and the children on the other side of the brook, and went forth himself to meet the incensed Esau and his bands, was treating the ladies of his party with contemptuous indignity; and that Lord Russell—not Lord John, but Lord William, be it understood—had but a poor appreciation of her dignity, of whom he said, that in parting from her, he had experienced the worst pang that death could inflict; that of the many blessings for which he had to thank heaven, this was the noblest and the best; but a poor appreciation of her, we say, since, instead of making her one of the band of conspirators, walking with her arm-in arm to his nightly consultations, and selecting her as the companion of his hazardous journeys, he had only made her mistress of his heart and home, only committed to her the office

of giving to the minds of their children those first and most enduring impressions which must, in all human probability, decide their characters and their destinies for time and for eternity; only looked to her as to the pure, untroubled fountain from which his own spirit was to be refreshed, and strengthened, and comforted—the clear light, which should beam ever on the path of honour and truth, and shine on him with undimmed and cheering ray, when all around was blackest night. But we must return from Lord William Russell and his benighted notions, to Mr. Sampson and the dawning light of this glorious era.

Of the two women who shared with Mr. Sampson the elevation of the platform, one was tall, square, large-boned—nature seeming to have charitably given space for the in-dwelling of so aspiring and expansive a spirit. Her forehead, though left as bare as possible, was not particularly distinguished for breadth; her black eyes were sharp and quick, her cheek-bones high, her mouth large, and garnished with somewhat irregular and discoloured teeth, which were very liberally displayed whenever she spoke. The other was a woman as unlike the first as possible. She was a Quakeress, as her dress indicated. Her chestnut hair was brushed smoothly back under the thin lease cap,

whose narrow border surrounded a fair face, as gentle and lovely in expression as any that ever bent over the cradled sleep of innocence. In her soft gray eyes, there burned a deep enthusiasm, which gave the key to her present occupation. Her *vive* and somewhat bold companion, doubtless enjoyed her position as the observed of all observers; she had mistaken notoriety for fame, and for fame she thirsted; but the gentle Quakeress was one of those of whom, alas! the world contains many, whose lives are a continual refutation of their creed; contending for the independence and the rights of woman, her mind yielded itself willingly to the dictation of another, and her heart would have been satisfied with the right to love and be loved by one. To please *him*, to win *his* applause, she did violence to her own modest instincts. Alas! for the gentle Quakeress, when she found, as she did one day, that, after all, *he* preferred as a wife one who understood less, or, at least, talked less, of her own rights.

But Mr. Sampson is about to speak, and all eyes are bent upon him. He is a ready speaker, and has tropes at his command; and, as he paints the burning sun, and pestilential swamps of the South—the wearied labourer, sick in soul and body, bending beneath his task — then, when failing

nature sunk under the burden, writhing beneath the lash of the oppressor, till he longed for that grave where "the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest," the most painful interest was kindled in his audience; women wept, and men longed for some Peter the Hermit, who should sound the war-cry of Christendom, against these worse than Infidels, who were thus desecrating the sacred birth-place of freedom. The language of Robert Bruce seems the spontaneous outpouring of spirits thus over-wrought—"Let us do or die." The feelings may therefore be conjectured, with which the hearers of Mr. Sampson heard him declare, that even in their midst there was one such crushed and blighted spirit; that one of those proud southern dames who, accustomed to the obsequious homage of her trembling slaves, had learned to think that the whole world must bend to her power, had dared to sully the pure soil of Massachusetts, the consecrated altar on which the blood of American freemen had been offered an acceptable sacrifice to the God of Battles, with the tread of a slave—"Within the very shadow of our homes," said he, "of those homes whose very existence were a protest against tyranny—a tyrannical oppressor lives and holds her victim in her bonds. He spoke not from report; he had seen

the sufferer; he had heard him in that broken speech, ever affecting to him, as the plaintive wail of unconscious suffering"—here there was tremendous applause—"yes, he had himself heard him bewail his sad condition, and he had made a minute of the circumstances, and the very words of the sufferer. Should he be trespassing too much on their patience if he read that minute?"

"No, no," was the loud response, "read it, read it!" and then followed the interview with Cato, and his own description of the heavy bondage under which he had all his life groaned, of course without any hint of the spiritual character of that bondage; for Mr. Sampson argued, that if not *le vrai*, when applied literally, it was at least *le vraisemblable*, and in that more nearly approaching truth than anything he had ever yet had it in his power to give to his numerous auditors.

The excitement was intense, uncontrollable. "Tell us where to find this oppressed and downtrodden fellow-man," was the cry of the multitude. But their movement, for they were already in motion, impatient of delay in such a cause, is checked. Springing from seat to seat, winning his way through the crowd by courteous words, where he can, and forcing it where he cannot, Mr. Pierson reaches the platform, and his intellectual head and

refined expression for an instant win favour, and the people are hushed, in expectation of his words; but when he begins, "My friends, you have been deceived. The gentleman at my side has either strangely misrepresented"—all is at once "confusion, worse confounded."

"This is no time for talk," they cry, "but for action—tell us where he is," to Mr. Sampson.

"I will, I will, my friends," he answered.

"And I will go with you," cried the black-eyed woman, "it is woman's spirit that should lead on the war against oppression, for she has been of the oppressed; let her voice herald his emancipation to her brother slave."

"That's your sort." "Hurra! three cheers for the women!" "The good time's come. Three cheers for Mr. Sampson, and three hisses for that mealy-mouthed gentleman that wanted to persuade us we couldn't get at the truth without his help. I guess we understand English, even when it is a little broken or so!"

Such were the cries of the excited crowd, as they hurried on towards the quiet home of two feeble women, who little dreamed that the world around them cared aught for their doings. Just as Alice had discovered the approach of the mob, their ranks divided, and a woman from among

them, opening the gate to the little court, entered and advanced up the gravelled path towards the house. Supposing that there must be some mistake, or that they must have paused only to ask some information of her, chiefly anxious to prevent any noise which should startle her mother, and fearful of the loud tones of the servant, Alice herself advanced into the hall, that she might open the door to the woman, and answer her inquiries. As she entered the hall from the parlour Cato appeared, breathless, agitated, with a skin of that peculiar ashen hue, which the negro assumes under the influence of strong emotion, exclaiming, "Oh, Miss Alice! Dem come for me, but don't gib me up; please, my dear Misses, no to gib me up!"

"Give you up! Certainly I will not, my dear old daddy. If they carry you off they shall carry me with you; but what has put it into your head that they have come for you?"

"I year 'em Miss Alice, when dey was a gwine by de garden; I year 'em. Oh my Missis dey is a knockin', wha' I for go?" and he looked about him in all the helpless bewilderment of terror.

"In here, quick," cried Alice, opening the parlour door as the knocks upon the outer door became more and more vehement; "Lock the door inside, daddy Cato."

"Yes, missis, but dem will broke em down."

"Then go through the door into the closet, then through that into mamma's room, locking each as you pass; before they have got through them all somebody will surely come to our help; but go, go, daddy Cato; I must open this door or they will wake mamma; pray, and God will send us help," she added, as she shut the parlour door, and waiting only to hear the key turned in it, opened that at which the knocker had been sounding, more and more violently for the last few minutes.

There was a strange contrast between the excited woman at the door, to the previous description of whose appearance we have only to add that her face was red, and her eyes gleaming with anger, at being kept so long from the attack for which she had prepared herself; there was a strange contrast we say, between her and the slender Alice, with her drooping head, whose sunny curls fell over a face that had become within the last few minutes very pale, but which yet expressed a fixedness of resolve, that no artist would have deemed it possible to give to those delicate features.

"What do you wish, madam?" asked Alice, in as quiet a tone as she could assume.

"I wish my brother; my poor, down-trodden, oppressed brother." This was spoken in a tone of

voice so raised as to be easily heard by the men now crowding around the gate.

"I assure you, madam," said Alice, speaking with soothing gentleness to one whom she now suspected of insanity, "your brother is not here; we have never had a man servant.

"Woman, that is false, and you know it; my brother, the son of my natural father and mother, indeed, has not been your servant, and I am thankful to say is not likely to be, for as great as you may think yourself; but a poor enslaved brother-man you do have and hold here as your bond servant, and I have come to proclaim freedom to the captive—to loose his bonds and let the oppressed go free."

Light began to gleam upon Alice; she saw the object of her visitors, but at the same time she determined that without his consent Cato should not be taken from the house, so long as she could prevent it. She answered, "I assure you, madam, there is no slave here—"

"No," interrupted the woman, "because by the very act of coming here—of breathing this air, and treading on this soil, he became free."

"If you allude to the coloured man who has spent the last winter in this house, he was, I assure you, free when he left Georgia; he came here of

his own free will, and has been detained by no bonds but those of his own affectionate, generous heart."

"If what you say is the truth, let us see him; let us hear it from himself."

She spoke with a taunting triumph, as if she meant to say that this was an ordeal to which Alice dared not submit lest her falsehood should be made manifest. Alice understood her; and, drawing herself up with a gentle dignity, said, "I am sorry, madam, that it is not in my power to gratify you; but he is unaccustomed to such an assemblage, and terrified by it, and I have promised him he shall not be disturbed."

"You should be sure you can keep promises, my young lady, before you make them." Then turning to the door, she cried, "Come here, some of you men; those who place themselves obstinately in the way of the triumphal car of Liberty must be crushed beneath its wheels. If woman's spiritual weapons fail, then man's strong hands must break open the prison-doors, and let the oppressed go free."

"Hear me!" cried Alice, gaspingly, and believing that she would triumph, and perform this feat of deliverance by herself; the intruder motioned back her myrmidons, who willingly gave way, as,

while determined not to relinquish the object of their coming, they yet felt some manly shame at attacking a house guarded, as it seemed, only by a feeble girl.

"The men have fallen back: I am waiting to hear you."

"My mother is ill—dangerously ill; the slightest agitation may be fatal to her: the noise you would make in searching the house—the very sight of so many strangers would kill her."

"Bring forth the man we want, and we will neither search the house nor show ourselves to your mother."

"Will you promise me that if he confirms what I have told you of his freedom, you will leave him unmolested?"

"Yes; if he will tell us so after we have got him far away from this house, where he will no longer fear your scourge and brand."

"And, pretending to be his friends, would you force him away?" asked Alice, while her pale cheeks flushed for a moment.

"Would we use force to save from the flames one who did not know their destructive power?"

"Then do your worst. I will not break my promise to the faithful, kind old man. I appeal from man to Heaven."

She stood before the door which Cato had locked, with her slight figure drawn up to its utmost height; her head thrown proudly back, and her arms folded; yet calm, even proud as was her attitude, her face was deadly pale, and she endeavoured in vain to still the trembling of the small white hand that rested on her arm. Never was woman's weakness and woman's strength better displayed than in that trembling frame, and that unyielding spirit.

The woman turned to the door again to invoke the force she had declared herself ready to use; but some change seemed to have passed upon the scene, a carriage stood before the gate; the crowd had separated into groups, and the men, as they conversed earnestly, looked ever and anon to the carriage, or to two gentlemen who, having descended from it, were talking in an animated and evidently interesting manner to those around them. Mr. Sampson is nowhere to be seen, and many others have disappeared in the few minutes since last she looked. Those who were within the yard, too, have retired from it. These observations are made at a glance, and while she still hesitates how she shall recall her friends, the two gentlemen advance. Alice hears the step of men springing forward, eager, as she supposes, to reach their

prey; every frightful account she had ever received of the ferocity and vulgarity of a mob rushes on her excited fancy; her pale lips quiver, her trembling limbs can scarce support her; suddenly the blood rushes back in a crimson flood to the face it had deserted, her eyes are lighted by a joyful gleam, and clasping her hands, she cries, "Oh, Mr. Grahame! Heaven has sent you again to save us!"

"And what of Mr. Gaston? Have you not a word of welcome to him?" asked that gentleman, as, with the freedom of an old friend, he passed his arm round Alice, and supported her still trembling form.

The agitation of Lieutenant Montrose and his friends may be easily conceived, as, on coming in sight of the cottage, they perceived the crowd that had gathered around it. Mr. Gaston urged his horses to a gallop, and still Charles Montrose thought they walked. But as they approached nearer, Mr. Gaston began to recognize individuals in the crowd, Mr. Sampson particularly, and he said, "Ah! now I understand what they are after. It is an abolitionist lecturer and his audience. Sampson must have been more than usually eloquent; but be assured, Lieutenant Montrose, there is no danger in this crowd, none, unless it may be

the danger of alarming your mother. Let me entreat you, for her sake, to command yourself, and remain in the carriage till she is prepared to see you."

"But these men," began Charles, excited almost to frenzy at the thought of insult to his mother and sister.

"These men," said Mr. Gaston, interrupting him, "will disappear very quickly and very quietly, I doubt not, as soon as I disperse the fog in which Sampson has, I dare say, enveloped the truth concerning our friend Cato. Only take care to give our people the truth, and they generally feel rightly.

Charles was persuaded, and the result was as we have seen. Still there were a few lingerers on the ground who probably wished to satisfy themselves that Cato was not altogether a myth before they departed; at least, so Mr Gaston concluded, and he accordingly said to Alice, "Where is Cato? I believe I must introduce him to his friends out here before they will be all satisfied to leave him. I will only take him as far as my carriage," he added, as he saw her hesitate. Then, as his eyes turned in the direction in which hers were fixed, he saw that Mr. Sampson's female pioneer had not withdrawn, and, advancing to her, he said, "I

know not by what right you intruded into this house, Madam?"

"The right of every man and woman to aid the oppressed."

"As there is no one here complaining of oppression, that right vanishes; your presence is disagreeable to Miss Montrose, and I must trouble you to leave the house."

"Is this your politeness to a lady?"

"By no means, madam; I am exceedingly polite to ladies, as Miss Montrose will tell you; but those who claim the rights of men, must of course expect to relinquish the courtesies voluntarily yielded to women."

Whether convinced by his reasoning, or subdued by his firmness, we know not; but she yielded and withdrew slowly, with a very sulky aspect, and muttering as she went, her strictures on men who had not the courage to carry out their own plans even when a woman opened the way for them.

Mr. Gaston closed the door behind her and then asked again, "Now, where is our good Cato?" Alice answered by knocking on the door beside her, and calling to Cato to open it to his friend, Mr. Gaston. Her cheerful voice gave him courage, and he came out, still looking doubtful, however, and exclaiming, "Ouw Mass Gaston! I glad for see

you, I neber been so scared since I born; dem gone, Missis?" he added, turning to Alice.

"Nearly all are gone, Cato," said Mr. Gaston, "the few who are left are particular friends of yours, who will not go till they have shaken hands with you."

"But what dem come for, Maussa? what dem come for?"

"To make you free, Cato, and take you away from Miss Alice, for fear she should beat you to death."

"Make me free! how I can free any more? dem da nonsense people, and what dem want take me from Miss Alice for? enty I come here for be wid Miss Alice? I wonder ef I been sick and couldn't do any ting, ef dem would nuss me, and take care o'me liker Miss Alice, and my missis to home is nuss we? dem da nonsense people, and I no want to shake han' wid 'em."

"But I have some one else to show you, Cato, whom you will be very glad to see, so come;" and taking the old man's arm, he led him out, saying to Grahame as he went, "I leave you to tell Alice whom I have out here."

It was a pleasant task to give such intelligence, and our readers will doubtless sympathize with the pleasure of Grahame in telling, and the rapture of

Alice in hearing it, yet we must ask them to follow Mr. Gaston and Cato to the carriage of the former.

Their first appearance was greeted by a shout from the people around; but Mr. Gaston, without suffering any to stop them, advanced at once to the carriage. As they approached, Charles Montrose sprang out, and seizing Cato's hands, cried, "Cato, my dear, good Cato! how glad I am to see you!"

"Mass Charles! my maussa! Far'er in Heaben is good to we dis day. Ouw, my maussa! I is glad for true."

There was the eloquence of truth in his words, and yet more in the tears which filled his eyes. The people heard and saw, and sympathized, as Mr. Gaston had felt sure they would; and when Robert Grahame threw up one of the sashes in the parlour, and beckoned to the now impatient Charles to enter, he willingly left Cato with them to tell his own story and argue his own cause. The result of the interview thus accorded may as well be given here before we proceed farther, at least its result on Cato's mind, who expressed it thus to Mr. Gaston afterwards.

"You see, maussa, dem an't so bery bad arter all; only I tink dem crazy 'bout free. Free bery good ting, but free ent all; when you sick, free

won't make you well, free won't gib you clo'es, nor hom'ny, let 'lone meat. Free bery good, but free ent ebery ting."

Robert Grahame had found it an easy task to prepare Alice for her brother's coming; hope had been ever living in her heart. He did not tell her that he was come, but only of his safety,—that he had seen him, that he was coming, that he would soon be there; and Alice exclaimed, "He is come, he is come! oh bring him to me, my brother! my brother!" and Robert Grahame raised the sash and beckoned, and in another moment the lost was found, and Alice, poor, drooping, weary Alice, was folded in her brother's arms, and with her arms encircling his neck, and her head resting on his bosom, she suffered the tears, which she had hitherto repressed with such painful effort, to flow, and felt that she had laid down her burden and was again a glad, untroubled child; and Charles, as he remembered what she had borne even this day, and thought of how many such days of trial she must have had, folded her more closely to his heart, and pressed his lips again and again to her brow and cheek, and murmured words of fond endearment in her ear. But at length he said, "Our mother!" and Alice roused herself from her happy trance, and exclaimed, "I must go to her and prepare her

for your coming. Oh Charles! she has been so ill, but she will be well now."

We mentioned that Mrs. Montrose was in the habit of resting on a couch in her own room for an hour every evening; and as the scenes we have just been narrating, though they may have been long in the description, were rapid in action, the hour had not expired when Alice stepped to the door, and, turning the latch very softly, looked in cautiously to see if her mother slept. She was awoke, and said, "What noise was that I heard a little while ago, Alice? Has anybody come?"

"Yes, Mr. Gaston is here; but I am afraid you have not slept much," and Alice knelt down by the couch and laid her own head on her mother's pillow.

"I have not slept a great deal, I believe; the truth is, we are generally so quiet here, that a little noise disturbs me. I woke up, thinking I heard a shout, and then it seemed to me there were doors opening and shutting, and people talking. I had a great mind at one time to get up and see what it was; but I was afraid it would worry you if I did. But come, darling, we must not leave Mr. Gaston alone; you go to him, and I will come presently."

"But Mr. Gaston is not alone; he brought company with him—Mr. Robert Grahame, who only arrived from Europe this afternoon."

"Well, it was very kind in him certainly to come so soon to see us—"

"And he came to bring us such pleasant news," said Alice quickly, "such very pleasant news about - whom of all the world would you rather it should be about, mother?'

Her mother looked into her smiling face, while her own flushed and grew pale again; but she did not say a word.

"And suppose it should be news about *him*, darling mother, good news, the best news, that he was well, that he was coming home?"

"Alice—is it so?"

"Could you bear to see him, mother?"

"Oh, Alice! tell me, tell me—" she was choked, breathless. Alice hastened to the door; called—it was the name so long unused — "Charles!" Mrs. Montrose rose, stood upright, her very soul in her eyes. Charles entered; a smile of perfect joy beamed over her pallid features; she extended her arms to embrace him, but before he could reach her they fell to her side, and she sank back upon her couch faint, but still conscious. Who shall attempt to paint the joy of that moment to the mother as her son, so long mourned as dead, knelt beside her, folded her in his arms, laid his head upon her bosom, repeating again and again, "My

mother! my mother!" as if those little words contained all of joy and of tenderness that language could convey. For her, she uttered no word; but her eyes were lifted upward, and her lips moved, in thanksgiving for the son who had been dead and was alive again. Alice saw the spirit was too highly wrought for the feeble body, and she poured out a glass of wine and water, and held it to her mother's lips, while she gave Charles a sign to rise and endeavour to resume the command over his own emotions. He obeyed; and then Mr. Gaston and Mr. Grahame came in to offer their congratulations. Mrs. Montrose received them pleasantly; and if she could not be said to converse, she listened to their conversation with seeming interest, though seldom removing her eyes from her son. Still her cheek was flushed, and her eye unnaturally bright, and Alice felt nervously afraid of the consequences of her agitation, till some word or movement of Charles, perhaps she could scarcely have told what herself, touched the source of tears, and, dropping her head upon his shoulder as he sat beside her, she wept.

"She is safe now," whispered Mr. Gaston to Alice; "get her to bed as soon as you can;" and he rose, and, making a sign to Robert Grahame, left the room. Robert Grahame also rose and approached Alice.

"May I not hope to have the pleasure of seeing your sister, Mr. Cochrane?" she asked.

"Will you permit me to drive her over in the morning?"

"Certainly. We shall be most happy to see you both."

He extended his hand: she placed hers in it. What was it that brought a quick flush to the cheek of Alice, and why did her eyes sink beneath his? Whatever the emotion was, it certainly was not displeasure; for even before he turned away he had seen a soft smile rise to her lips, and it lingered there long after he had said good night.

CHAPTER III.

"If I do prove her haggard;
Though that her jesses were my dear heart-strings,
I'd whistle her off, and let her down the wind
To prey at fortune."

HAPPY were the dreams of Alice that night, and bright her waking thoughts, yet they did not make her a sluggard. She was early among her flowers, and there Charles found her. There good mornings were exchanged, and then Charles walked at her side; and as he talked, broke off carelessly, almost unconsciously, the petals of a rose which he had taken from the basket on her arm. Having flung this aside, at length, he was about to take another, when Alice laid her hand on his, saying, "Stop, Charles!" I cannot afford to have you break up any more of my flowers."

"Why flowers cost nothing," he said, as he perversely tried to seize a half-opened bud which he supposed she especially valued.

"They cost some labour; and even if you call that nothing, things are worth, Mr. Gaston says, what they will bring in the market; and that bud

will form the charm of a bouquet that will bring twelve and a half cents in the market."

"In the market! why you surely do not sell your flowers?"

"I certainly do; or rather, daddy Cato does for me."

Charles looked disturbed. "Alice," he said, "you must not do this again; nor must you embroider for money, as Mr. Gaston told me yesterday you had been doing."

"And why not, Charles? Do you know that I make nearly two dollars a week by my flowers now, and shall probably do at least as much for five or six months of the year; and that I can make more than two dollars a week by my embroidery all the year around: and I have now made an arrangement —did Mr. Gaston tell you of it?—by which I can pay our rent by my music; and why should I not do these things?"

"What do you think your cousins, the Misses Browne, and their fashionable acquaintances, would say to you if they knew you had turned flower-girl, and seamstress, and music teacher?"

Charles spoke jestingly, for in truth he was ashamed of the suggestion; yet he could not disguise from himself, if he did from Alice, that there was some serious feeling underneath his jest: it is

only the simplicity of the child, the wisdom of the philosopher, or the elevation of the matured Christian which can despise the world's judgment, and Charles could lay claim to none of these. He felt pained that his sister should have been obliged to work for her bread; not because of the personal suffering or inconveniences involved in such a condition, but because of the world's estimation of it. And yet this false, conventional sentiment, could not overbear his innate conviction that the very thing of which he was ashamed was her highest honour, and ought to have made her proudest exaltation. And so he spoke, as we have said, jestingly; and Alice answered simply, "They could not say less than they do now; and it would not greatly increase my happiness if they said more."

"Why? do you not like them?"

"Like my cousins? Well, yes; at least I have no dislike to them; but, in truth, Charles, I do not know them very well, though I spent a winter in the same house—for they went out a great deal, and I was in deep mourning and did not go out at all."

"But since you came here—have they not been to see you?"

"Oh, yes! they have called on us several times."

"And my uncle—does he come often?"

"Not very—but often enough. I do not believe mamma cares about it now. At first I was afraid she did, and it vexed me. But this has nothing to do with my flowers; why did you say, I must not sell them?"

"Because there is no necessity for it now. You know my pay is twelve hundred dollars; I can live very well on half of it—the other half, with what we may get on mamma's bank stock, will support you and her."

"My dear, generous brother!" said Alice, "and you think I will let you spend half your pay and submit to all sorts of privation yourself that I may be idle and play the fine lady—but I shall do no such thing. We owe some rent to Mr. Gaston, you may pay that; and if you can afford it, you may make an allotment of—say two hundred dollars—of your pay to us, which will give mamma some luxuries that she would not otherwise permit herself to enjoy—the rest I can manage easily enough."

Charles could not acknowledge to her that what she called generosity was in no small degree a petty and not wholly unselfish pride; yet he could not relinquish his point, and he said, "But you are not strong enough to work, Alice—you have been doing too much already—you looked pale

and worn last night; and though your cheek is fresh enough now, darling"—and he kissed it as he spoke—" it is not so round as of old."

" But it was not work that changed it, Charles. You say I am not strong enough to work; but I say I am not strong enough to be idle. If you could have seen how sad and spiritless I was when I first came here. Oh, Charles! I have felt since I began to try to make something, how very good our Heavenly Father was to give man work to do when he lost his happy Eden!"

Charles could urge his wish no longer. He walked silently by her side for a moment, and then asked tenderly, " And what had made my pet sad and spiritless?"

" My dear uncle had not then been long dead; I missed him every hour—I shall always miss him!" she said earnestly, while tears rose to her eyes. Charles too was moved, and it was only after a minute's silence that he commanded his voice to say, " And was this all?"

" I was very sorry too to leave my dear Southern home."

" And why did you leave it? I think it would have been wiser to stay there, at least till I returned, or till you were sure I never would return."

"Mamma preferred coming to Boston," said Alice simply; it was the truth, though not quite the whole truth. Alice would not for worlds have said, "My aunt had grown cold."

"And did Donald consent to your coming?"

"Yes," said Alice, as she stooped to pick a flower.

"Yes!" repeated Charles; "and have you nothing else to tell me?"

"What should I have to tell you, Charles?"

"I left you and Donald engaged; are you still so?"

"We are not."

"And whose fault is this? Is it Donald's?" and his brow crimsoned, and his eye grew fiery at the thought—"or"—in a more subdued tone—"is it yours?"

"I do not think it was the fault of either. Donald was in great difficulty through the villany of George Browne, as he says, and I am sure whatever Donald says is true: he would have had to sell everything; Montrose Hall, and even his people, if my aunt and Isabelle had not helped him; and my aunt would do nothing if—if he married." Alice did not say if he married *me*.

"And so Donald consented to break his engagement?"

"How could he help it, when I declared that nothing would ever induce me to fulfil it?"

"My poor Alice! you might well be sad and spiritless after—"

"But this had nothing to do with my being so; I assure you, Charles, it had not." Alice spoke very earnestly, for she saw that Charles was dissatisfied with Donald. Her assurances did not remove the shadow from his mind.

"You cannot persuade me, Alice, that you could part without pain from one to whom you were attached."

"But I never was attached to Donald—in that way, I mean—"

"Then you were very wrong to engage yourself to him."

"So I think now; but then, Charles, I loved my uncle so dearly, and he wished it; and my refusal at first had made Donald so miserable, I thought it must be right to do what would make them happy, even though it made me very unhappy."

"True woman's reasoning; your sex should always be suspicious of a course that demands self-sacrifice; it is the direction in which they most frequently err. And was Donald as happy in the separation as yourself?"

"I was not happy in it, Charles; I loved

Donald, though not as he would have had me; his happiness was very dear to me—and Montrose Hall, oh, how I loved my home, and how I shrank from leaving it! But that is all over now," she added in a different tone, "and I dare say Donald will be just as happy in the end; and I shall be a great deal happier keeping house for you and mamma."

"Do you correspond with Donald?"

"No; I thought it better, and so did mamma, that I should not do so at first; and afterwards, when I suppose no harm could have come of it, and when I would have liked to write to him as I did in old times, it was awkward to begin. But both Mr. Dunbar and Isabelle write me, that he is well and doing well; that he has learned to live upon his pay, and even to save money on it; and he every now and then sends me a kind brotherly message, which it makes me very happy to receive."

"And he has paid his debt to George Browne?"

"Yes; but he has had to mortgage all his property, and my aunt's, and Isabelle's, to obtain the money with which he paid it."

"And where is George Browne?"

"I do not know; I think he is in disgrace with his father. I have not seen him since I came

North, and I never heard him named at home except by his mother, and that I noticed was never when uncle Browne was there. But come, I must go in and make my bouquets," said Alice, who was now walking only to please Charles, her flowers having been all picked some time ago.

Charles went in the house with her, and sat with commendable patience watching her, as with tasteful eye she selected and arranged her flowers, and with dexterous fingers bound them together. He even tried to return the smile with which she appealed to him to know if they were not beautiful, when her work was completed; but he did not succeed very well in the effort, and perhaps it was as well, for his desire not to annoy her this morning by further objections to her plans, that his mother soon after interrupted their tête-à-tête.

Charles saw more plainly this morning than he had done the night before the change in his mother.

"What can I do to make you quite well?" he said, as he bent over her tenderly.

"Oh! I shall be quite well soon; you and the summer will make me well."

"I am here, but where is the summer? This morning feels much more like December than May."

"It is very cold," said Mrs. Montrose, shivering and wrapping her shawl more closely around her. "Sheltered as our garden is, I do not know how Alice has coaxed any flowers to grow in it. How warm it is at Montrose Hall now!"

"Suppose we go and meet the summer, mother?"

"At Montrose Hall?" asked his mother.

"No, not at Montrose Hall; at least, we will wait till we are invited to do that; it is no home for us now; but there is summer at other places; a little travel will do Alice good as well as you. We will go as far south as Baltimore, at least."

"But Charles," cried Alice in dismay, "what are you thinking of? do you not know that travel costs a great deal of money?"

"Why, positively, Alice, you are getting miserly," drawing her to his side as he spoke; "does she not starve you sometimes, mother?"

"She would starve herself for me, dear child!" said Mrs. Montrose, with a tender smile, directed to Alice.

"Which I shall not let her do," cried Charles.

"But, Charles, where will you get this money?"

"Why, my dear child, you see, living on a desert island is not an extravagant affair; one may really save considerable money in that way in a year, as I find by a calculation I have been making this

morning, by which I perceive, that when I have repaid to Mr. Grahame the amount I borrowed from him, I shall have one thousand dollars left in the purser's hands free of the world. Now, my little miser, may we travel a little, and give mamma an earlier summer?"

"Oh, yes! only I wish it could be to Montrose Hall."

"Well; we shall see what Donald says in answer to a letter which I wrote him from Marseilles; I told him to address his answer to the care of my uncle Browne, and I shall call to-day to know if it has arrived. But how soon can you and mamma be ready to set out?"

"Let me see; to-day is Thursday; we can be ready by Monday next. But, oh Charles! I had quite forgotten my engagement with Mr. Gaston; I am afraid I ought not to go."

"I will arrange all that to-day; you must remember, my dear child, now that I am at home, you are no longer to make bargains and hire yourself out as if you were free; you belong to me now."

He put his hand on her head, as if sealing the claim, and she looked up into her brother's face with eyes all bright and joyous, and said, "I like that a great deal better, but I am not sorry to know that I can help myself."

"My poor Ally! I hope if you ever have the trial to make again, it may be with such a friend as Mr. Gaston near you."

"Do you mean to say, sir," asked Alice, with a little pout, "that I could not have got along without Mr. Gaston?"

"Not at all; I only mean that while you are true to the delicate and generous instincts of your sex, I hope you will ever find near you some man true to the noblest instincts of his; you will, in that case, gain far more from courtesy and kindness than the strongest man could demand as of right."

It was nearly noon when Robert Grahame and his sister drove out to Cambridge, accompanied by Ellen Gaston, who declared that she could not possibly permit a day to pass without congratulating Alice on the arrival of her brother. The meeting between Mary and Alice was affectionate, and full of pleasant memories. Alice reminded her of the lessons she had received from her in housekeeping, and assured her they had often been serviceable to her.

"And I have learned to garden, too," she said; "and though my garden is not so beautiful as yours at Flowerdale, it has given me some very pleasant employment."

"Let me see it," said Mary Grahame, "I am as great a lover of gardens as ever."

"And so am I, Miss Montrose; and besides, I have learned something about the cultivation of flowers from gardeners abroad, and may give you some valuable hints;" and Robert Grahame rose to accompany his sister and her friend.

"I fear there is nothing in my poor little garden that will reward you for the trouble of going," said Alice, as she led the way; "I have already cut all the flowers that were in bloom this morning."

"And what have you done with them, Alice? I have not seen one in the house," said Ellen Gaston, with the *mal-adresse* that seems inherent in young girls of her age.

We are afraid Charles wasted some wishes upon her, which, as they were not in the Temple of Truth, remained unspoken, as Alice answered with perfect quietness, "They were made into bouquets and taken into town by daddy Cato before you were up this morning, Ellen, I suspect."

"I used often to wish I could do so with mine at Flowerdale," said Mary Grahame, with quiet tact; "but there was no flower-market at Springfield."

"Had you many flowers in your island home, Lieutenant Montrose!" asked Mr. Grahame.

"A great many, and of brilliant colours, but generally quite scentless."

"Lieutenant Montrose," repeated Ellen Gaston to herself, like one considering the sound.

"Well, do you like it, Miss Gaston?" asked Charles, laughing.

Ellen coloured. "I was thinking where I had heard that name lately," she said. "I remember now; it was my cousin, who has just returned from Florida, speaking of a Lieutenant Montrose of the army."

"And what did she say of him, Ellen?" asked Alice; "something good, I hope, for he is my cousin."

"Oh, yes; she said he was the handsomest man she ever saw."

"Was that all?" asked Alice, with disappointment in look and voice.

"No; she said, too, that he was very much admired at a ball where she saw him, and that he danced several times with a lady called the Florida Belle, and people said they thought they would make a match."

"I hope, if they do, that the Florida Belle is something more than beautiful, for my cousin is a great deal better than handsome."

Alice spoke in her quietest tone; no flushing or

fading of the cheek, no drooping of the eye—nothing that marked feelings agitated or constrained; but, as she turned from Ellen, her eyes met those of Robert Grahame fastened upon her with an expression which in a moment destroyed her self-possession. Before any other could observe her confusion, he had called her attention to a rose tree, whose leaves exhibited a somewhat unhealthy appearance, and, after advising the treatment which he considered best for it, he described some very beautiful exhibitions of roses he had seen abroad, and then he spoke of the sentiment always associated with certain flowers, and of the singular universality of such associations, and he repeated to her allusions to the rose in the old English poets, and in the Latin and the Greek, translating, of course, the two last, and she found herself, she scarce knew how, tasking her memory for her recollections of French and German poets on the same subject; and then they talked of the different aspects in which the same sentiment was presented by those various nations: and all was so interesting, and so varied with occasional observations on the flowers they passed in their walk about the garden, that Alice took no note of time, and the rest of the company had returned to the house long before she suspected it. Scarcely had

she time to feel the little awkwardness the discovery created, when he led the way towards the house, continuing the conversation with such ease of manner, after their entrance, that, had any one even thought of rallying them on their absorption, he would have forgotten it before he had found an opportunity.

This day Alice received from Isabelle the happy intelligence of her engagement to Major Wharton, and Charles found a letter from Donald awaiting him at Mr. Browne's, to whose care he had requested him to address his letters, and within his own one for Mr. Grahame, also from Donald.

Isabelle's letter was very pleasant, not only from the joyous intelligence it conveyed, but also from the confidence evinced in the affection and sympathy of Alice and of her aunt.

"I am almost ashamed," Isabelle wrote, "to tell you how early a day has been appointed for my marriage; but you know Major Wharton's military duties are very exacting, and, as he does not know how long his present liberty may continue, Mamma has acceded to his petition that we shall be married in May; and I have appointed Thursday, the 29th, as the day. It is early, I know,—too early I am afraid the world will think; but when he reminded me how soon he might be ordered away, I could

not refuse his request; besides, why should I delay? have I any doubt to satisfy? do I not know him to be truth and honour itself; and if he is satisfied, what care I for the world?

"But, dear Alice, I have not yet said anything of that which was my chief object in writing you so soon. I want you to come to me, you and my aunt. I know it is not the pleasantest season to come South; but you know it is hardly ever very warm here before July or August, and my aunt likes warm weather; and my mother says, that if you will come and my aunt will remain with her, she will request you to take her place in a little excursion which Major Wharton has planned for the summer months, and then you can return with me in the fall, and we shall be all together once more at the dear old hall. Mr. Dunbar longs for your coming; you know you were always the pet lamb of his flock."

To this urgent invitation from Isabelle, Mrs. Colonel Montrose added a postscript. It was not very warmly affectionate in its language, but it was both courteous and kind. There was but one allusion to the past; it was in the following words:—"When we parted, anger at the injustice of another had, I fear, made *me* unjust; I could not otherwise have suffered those whom my husband so dearly

loved to leave the shelter of his home, without some effort to retain them; but on this subject I will say more when we meet."

Donald's letter to Charles extended this invitation to him.

That to Mr. Grahame was in acknowledgment of his kindness, in the arrangements whereby, as he confessed to him, his home and the fortunes of his family had been preserved from utter ruin. He added that he had requested Mr. Symonds to prepare the papers necessary to transfer the mortgage hitherto held by Mr. Goldwire to Mr. Grahame. The letter concluded with hearty professions of regard, and an earnest wish that he would visit the South with Miss Grahame, and give him and his mother and sister the pleasure of seeing them at Montrose Hall.

These letters would at once have decided Charles Montrose to extend their projected tour to Montrose Hall, especially as his mother, disappointed in her brother, and in the happiness of her Northern home, and anxious for the future of Alice, evidently inclined to accept the invitation of her sister-in law for the year; but, strange to say, as Mrs. Colonel Montrose became more kind, Alice seemed to feel less desire to accept her hospitality, and thus a little hesitation was induced. Things re-

mained in this state for two or three days, during which the Grahames were constant visitors at Cambridge, and Robert Grahame even talked of joining their party in their Southern excursion, as he had seen, he said, but little of his own land, and felt ashamed to be more ignorant of it than of foreign countries. Charles listened with surprise, remembering the impatient desire he had expressed several times during their voyage to be at Springfield, and at work; and, had not Mr. Grahame been one with whom it was not very easy to jest, when he himself chose to be in earnest, he might have rallied him on his change of purpose.

It was the fourth day after the return of Charles, Mary Grahame had spent the morning with Alice, and had dined at Cambridge. Her brother drove out for her, by appointment, at four o'clock. There was still enough of the lengthening day left for Alice to execute some commissions in Boston for her mother, and to take a piece of work to Mrs. Martin, and she readily accepted Mary's invitation to her to go in the carriage with her, intending herself to return in the stage—an intention in which Robert Grahame, it may be presumed, did not share. We have enumerated all the avowed objects of Alice in Boston, but the piece of work

to be taken to Mrs. Martin was of far less consequence in her eyes, it must be confessed, than was her interview with the stranger, who had declared himself capable of exercising so important an influence on the fortunes of her friends in Georgia. Her promise had never been out of her mind for an hour since it was made. It was her first secret from her mother, and it weighed heavily upon her heart; yet she never doubted that she had been right in making it, and with all her apprehensiveness there mingled something of exultation at the thought that she might aid, in even a remote degree, in restoring the fortunes of those to whom she owed so much. It was with a strange mixture of emotions, then, that she took leave of Mary Grahame, and descended from the carriage at Mrs. Martin's.

"Where will the carriage find you, half an hour hence?" asked Robert Grahame, as he handed her out. "William will drive you out," he added, glancing at Mr. Gaston's coachman, as he saw that Alice was surprised at his question. "I had your brother's consent to the arrangement; it will be too late for you to return in the stage, unless you permit me to accompany you."

This last suggestion decided Alice, and she answered hastily, "William will find me here—I

shall probably be here for half an hour," and bidding her friends adieu, entered the shop.

It must be premised, that Mrs. Martin's lodger had so far confided in her as to tell her, that he had formerly been acquainted with the family of Miss Montrose, and that he wished to make some inquiries respecting them; that for this purpose, Miss Montrose had promised him a private interview, and he wished Mrs. Martin, when next she came to the store, to invite her into the parlour, and retire herself; leaving the door open, and keeping out of ear-shot. He could not have spoken to a person better disposed towards his plans than good, kind Mrs. Martin.

"Poor things!" she said to herself, "it's plain enough to be seen how the land lies; she's been rich—there's no mistake about that—and now she's poor, and he's not over well off, and so I suppose some old curmudgeon of a father or an uncle stept in between 'em, and he can't stand it, and now he's a trying to see her this way. Well, I won't stand in their way, poor things. I guess there ain't no harm going on, when he tells a decent woman like me about it, and they right before my eyes, with the door open between us."

And with a real interest in the little romance she had concocted, Mrs. Martin had waited with

nearly as much impatience as her lodger for the appearance of Alice, and now, as soon as she entered, she exclaimed, "My dear child! what under the sun and airth kept you so long; Mr. Green's almost fretted his gizzard out to see you. So now, don't wait; go in the parlour, quick; you'll find him there, I guess."

Alice could not have coloured more violently had all Mrs. Martin's suspicions been correct, than she did at this address. She was angry with the stranger for having brought her into such a position, and almost ready to declare that she would not see him, but again she remembered all that he had intimated he could do for her uncle's family, and she resolved to abide by her promise; but at the same time to convince Mrs. Martin that she, at least, was in no hurry to see Mr. Green. Accordingly she answered coolly and somewhat haughtily, "I will see the gentleman when I have finished my business with you."

"Oh dear me! don't be so peticklar; the business ain't of a mite of consequence."

"I beg your pardon, madam, it is of great consequence to me. Please to look at the work I brought, and see if it suits you."

Mrs. Martin's impatience was overborne by the calm decision of Alice. She examined the work,

pronounced it admirable, heard with many expressions of sorrow that her best embroiderer was about to leave Boston for some weeks, if not for a longer period, and at length, with evidently abated interest and lowered expectation, proceeded, with the permission of Alice, to inform Mr. Green that she was there, and would see him if he was disengaged. She was immediately invited into the parlour, and Mrs. Martin returned to her usual post, the door between the shop and parlour being left open according to compact; and Alice, having studiously placed herself where she was in full view of any one in the shop, to intimate that the interview would not be continued longer than the business on which she had come demanded, remained standing, resting her folded hands on the back of the chair which the gentleman had placed for her on her entrance. He also stood near her, leaning his arm against the mantel-piece; and question and answer followed rapidly, and Alice became deeply interested; so deeply that for a time she forgot all else. Of the communications made in this interview, or the results to which they led, we shall say nothing at present; except that Alice felt they fully justified the step she had taken; and though she earnestly entreated to be permitted to confide her present interview, its

cause and its consequences, to her mother and brother, yet, when Mr. Green, with almost fierce decision, declared that if she did not instantly promise to preserve inviolable secrecy on the subject until she should receive his permission to reveal it, he would instantly depart from Boston, leaving no traces by which he might be followed. And thus all the advantage of his information would be lost to her friends; she did not feel at liberty to decline his terms.

The coolness and calmness of Alice on her entrance had nearly deceived Mrs. Martin respecting the supposed object of her visit; but the eager interest with which she listened and her companion spoke could scarcely fail to revive the imagination once entertained, while the delay to which Alice had submitted to convince her of her error had brought another on the scene, whose observation was a thousand-fold more terrible to her than that of Mrs. Martin.

When Robert Grahame had said that "William would drive" Alice home, he did not say, what was to him much the most important part of his meaning, that he should attend her himself. In execution of this design, having taken Mary to Mr. Gaston's, and waited, as he supposed, till only sufficient time was left to bring him to Mrs. Mar-

tin's at the termination of the half hour allotted by Alice to her business, he re-entered the carriage and was driven there.

"Sit still, William," said Robert Grahame, as the old man prepared to descend from the carriage, "sit still; I will myself inquire for Miss Montrose," and, opening the carriage door, he stepped out and entered the shop. Not seeing Alice immediately, he inquired, "Is Miss Montrose here, madam?"

"Well, and if she be here, what do you want with her?" asked Mrs. Martin; strongly suspecting that in this man she had one of the cruel relatives that had separated her interesting lovers.

"I wish to take her home," was the reply, seemingly corroborative of her apprehensions; "will you please to tell her the carriage is waiting?"

"You may tell her yourself, if you like; I'm none of your lackeys," said the displeased Mrs. Martin. As she spoke she glanced towards the parlour, and added in an undertone, which yet reached the ear of her companion, "I guess she won't thank you for coming, nor for your carriage neither."

Robert Grahame looked: at that moment, Alice, forgetful, as we have said, of all but the interests involved in her conversation with the

stranger, had extended her hand to him, and it was clasped in his. Alice was directly before Robert Grahame: of her companion he only saw the outstretched hand and arm, and a part of the tall figure: her clear, truthful eyes were uplifted, her lips moved, and, though no sound reached his ear, he distinctly read in their movement "I promise!"

Robert Grahame stood spell-bound,—not a sound escaped him, not a movement; but as she withdrew her hand, apparently some recollection that she might be observed from the shop made her turn her head in that direction, and she saw him, met his look in which indignation and contempt were at that moment overborne by agony, and with a low cry, clasping her hands over her face, she retreated out of his sight. Occupied wholly with her, he did not see that at her cry her companion turned toward him, and with a low muttered exclamation of dismay approached the door, still keeping as much as possible out of sight, and quickly closed it so far that none could see within the parlour. It was still ajar, however, and through it came the sound of low but earnest voices, then sobs were heard, and he set his teeth hard and pressed his hand with such a vice-like grip upon a small but stout wooden box upon the counter on which it

rested, that it was crushed into splinters, and yet he knew it not. A half an hour perhaps had passed—it seemed to him an age—when the door slowly opened, and Alice appeared in it, ghastly pale, and with what might have been the resolution of despair in her face. She drew back as she perceived him still standing there—perhaps she had hoped that he was gone; but this was only for an instant, and then she advanced with a slow, heavy movement, as if she had scarcely power to lift her limbs. As she approached him, her white lips moved, and she uttered in a hoarse whisper, "I am sorry you waited."

Without a word he followed her to the carriage, handed her into it and seemed about to shut the door; but Alice, though she did not,—though at that moment she could not speak—turned on him a pleading look, and notwithstanding the stony rigidity of his features relaxed not, the stern expression of his eye did not soften, he entered the carriage and seated himself beside her, and who shall say that he did not in truth rejoice at the obligation thus laid on him to prolong this their last interview.

The evening was far advanced, and a heavy fog, which had arisen since sunset, had made it both dark and chill. Induced by the chillness, while

they were within the shop, William had closed the carriage—which could be made close or open at pleasure—and had thus given them a seclusion which Robert Grahame would certainly at no time have commanded and which at present he probably did not desire. In perfect silence they rode on through the streets, over the bridge; they were on the causeway. Alice glanced at him from time to time, as if to seek some relenting in his face, but there was none. At length, in a tremulous voice, she said, "You are judging me very hardly and very wrong, Mr. Grahame."

"My judgment is of little moment, Miss Montrose; but what says your mother—your brother—do they know this?"

"Oh, no! no! would that they did!—but I must not—dare not tell them."

"Excuse me, then, if I think that I can scarcely judge too severely of that which you dare not confide to a mother such as yours."

His tone was stern and hard, and Alice did not answer, for she felt that she could say nothing which could change his views, while she could not say all. For him, passions at war with each other, each striving for mastery, and each too strong for speech, were tearing his heart asunder. But at length a new thought entered his mind—a thought

born not of the passions of the moment, but of the lifelong ruler of his actions—duty—" What *ought* he to do. How could he save her from the miserable shipwreck he foresaw for her?"

He turned to look upon her, and their eyes met in one long, earnest gaze—hers, humble, tender, supplicating as for more than life—his, pitying, yet not yielding, as might have been those of him who loved his child and slew her.

" Mr. Grahame," said Alice, " will it not change your opinions, your feelings, if I tell you that I shall probably never again see the person I met this afternoon?"

The trembling voice was hushed, but the eyes still questioned. They read no relenting in his glance. It rather grew darker, for he said to himself, " It is for this she is sorrowing; the sobs I heard were wrung from her by the agony of parting."

" Such an assurance will at least relieve me from a painful responsibility, and save me the necessity of arousing the vigilance of your mother and brother," was the reply to her, made in all the bitterness of disappointed passion. It was plain that the reins, which, in the intoxication of a happy dream, he had relaxed for a few days past, were not easily recovered.

The harshness of his last words awakened the pride of Alice, and, with a faint colour tinging the cheeks that had been so deadly pale, she answered, "You would find it difficult to teach them a lesson of distrust, sir; they have known me too long and love me too well."

His eyes flashed upon her—one startling, burning glance, which seemed to say as plainly as words, "And have I not loved you?"

Alice so interpreted it, and yet it brought no triumph to her heart, for she said, "It has been a dumb love; if it find voice now, it will be in the agony of the death-hour." It found no voice. He quickly averted his eyes, and sat beside her in gloomy silence during the remainder of their drive. The passionate heart had perchance rebelled for a moment, but the iron will had asserted its mastery. When he spoke again his speech had lost all abruptness, all bitterness; it was like ice—smooth and cold.

"I know not," he said, "but that I should apologize to you, Miss Montrose; I may have exercised a freedom in my remarks not permitted to a mere acquaintance; if so, I can only assure you that as it has been the first, so it shall be the last time I shall annoy you in this way. An hour since, and the wealth of the world would not have tempted

me to an irreverent thought of you; now—" he hesitated, again he was wandering into a forbidden path; he recollected himself, and resumed—"Excuse me, I only meant to say that I would not again offend you by the exercise of such an unauthorized liberty."

Alice did not attempt to answer—she could command neither words nor voice. As the carriage stopped, he descended and held out his hand to assist her; but, without touching it, she sprang past him, walked with a strength born of pride to the house, ascended the steps and entered the door. As she turned to close the door, she saw that he had attended her to the steps. As she saw him, he raised his hat with distant courtesy and turned away. She heard the carriage door close on him—caught the word "Home!" as it rang out calm and clear on the evening air, then, feeling that her strength was already giving way, she tottered to the parlour and stood for a moment in the open doorway. Charles, who sat there alone, reading, looked up as he heard her step; her appearance startled him; he rose and approached her rapidly, saying, "What *is* the matter, Alice?"

She tried to meet him, she tried to speak, but motion and speech seemed both impossible, and before he was near enough to catch her she had

sunk on the floor in a fainting fit. Afraid to alarm his mother, Charles lifted her to a sofa and sprinkled water in her face. She soon revived. As he saw the colour returning to her face, he knelt beside her and said tenderly, "Are you better, my darling?" He would have kissed her, but she averted her face quickly, while a shudder passed over her form.

"Alice," cried Charles, rising as he spoke, "you make me miserable; what is the meaning of this; How did you come home?"

His tones aroused her; she saw the necessity of exertion, and she replied, though slowly, and with evident effort, "I came in Mr. Gaston's carriage. William drove me. My head aches; but let me lie here quietly till mamma comes in, and I shall be better."

"You shall lie here all the evening," he said, as he removed her shawl; he had already taken off her bonnet. "You do too much, Alice; and I shall insist on your giving up all this senseless embroidering and teaching, and I know not what; you are not strong enough for such things. I shall set out for Montrose Hall with you and my mother the next week, without any further hesitation."

Alice was too much worn to-night for emotion of any kind, or she would have been glad to hear this resolution. She was not glad—that she could not

be of anything now—but thankful, when they did really set out on their journey South, accompanied by Cato, who knew not how to express his joy at the thought, not only of getting back home himself, but of carrying "Miss Charles and Miss Alice and all," back with him.

To Alice, even in the night that encompassed her, there was a gleam of pleasure in witnessing his joy, and in testifying her appreciation of his fidelity in every way that her scanty means would permit. Finding that any attempt to return the money which he had received from Mr. Gaston and placed in her hands, and which she had been able to preserve untouched, would both grieve and mortify him, she requested that gentleman to receive it, and make such a disposal of it that Cato might every year receive a little annuity from it; and for such favourites as Alice and Cato, Mr. Gaston did what few merchants are willing to do, he charged himself with the management of a very small deposit.

But while the outer life went thus smoothly on with our poor Alice, how was it with the inner? A few pages from a book, which was always kept carefully locked in her writing-desk, may tell us more than we can learn in any other way, for that book was her only confidant. The first page we

extract was written the day after her last visit to Mrs. Martin's. It was as follows:—

"I understand myself now. Of all that seemed strange—of much that must have seemed to others as it did to me, mere unreasoning impulse, I can now see the source. I know now the beginning, and—alas! alas!—the end. When I was very young, I remember I used to think how great a happiness it would be to have some one person as good and wise as Mr. Dunbar, and as strong and brave as my dear old uncle, to protect, and cherish, and guide me. At first it was as my father that this dream personage presented himself to me. It was pleasant to me to think of yielding to the guidance, even of submitting to the authority of one so excellent. I used even to fancy scenes in which I obeyed with reluctance, that it might be recognized by me as truly obedience, that I might enjoy the feeling of a true surrender of myself to a stronger and wiser nature. Such was the type in my mind of man. I cared not for the outer form of this noble spirit. I never attempted to portray it: he might be in poverty, he might be very plain in appearance, he might even be unsightly and deformed, but if he were wise, and good, and strong; if he had curbed his own more powerful nature, and thus proved that he was capable of

holding others in a strong yet gentle grasp, in that man my spirit would acknowledge its guide and ruler. An untried youth, like Donald, however richly endowed—and he is richly endowed—could not meet the necessities which my heart had thus unconsciously created for itself; and now I understand why I recoiled with such dismay from Donald's first attempt to bind my life to his. But at last it was only a dream that stood between us —I had never seen its full realization. Captain Wharton approached it, but, though strong, he had not, like my ideal, the serenity of tried and conscious power; and when Donald became ill, and my uncle pleaded for him, how could I prefer a dream to their happiness? But Donald made a new friend; he became enthusiastic in his praise; he wrote of him, he talked of him, and I heard of a boy of seventeen, ardent, sensitive, refined, who, at the command of duty, had immolated his tastes, curbed his passions, assumed responsibilities which would have weighed down many a man, and fulfilled them as few men could. I heard of the almost magical power he exerted over others; I heard that, stern to every trait of meanness, of selfishness, he was gentle to the weak, and lenient to the occasional errors of heedless impulse in the young; and I recognized my ideal, and though I

knew not why, I well remember now that I grew sadder at the thought of surrendering my life's guidance to Donald. Shall I ever forget the emotion of that seeming death hour, in which he first appeared to me, the strange sweetness with which even then I rested on him, and obeyed his every direction! I even consented to leave my mother when he bade me, and left her without fear, for he was with her. Perchance the world would call such trust unwise, indiscreet, and so it may have been; but I could not withhold it. I saw him fearless where a brave man might have trembled, calm amidst confusion, generously considerate of two strangers where even good men often think only of themselves. It seems wonderful to me, now, that I should not have known the true nature of the feeling he inspired: that I should not at least have understood why I grew more and more distressed at the thought of binding myself indissolubly to Donald. Had I understood it, it would have been a great sin, as well as sorrow, to contemplate the becoming the wife of another; but, strange as it may seem, I only began to read the secret of my heart the first evening of his arrival, when he held my hand in his, and read my soul through my eyes, and let me see some faint reflection in his own face of what he read there. I began

to read it then, and I finished—I saw it all—when I looked again that last fatal evening into his eyes and saw that I was condemned, rejected—that though I might have power to agonize, I had no power to subdue, that great heart. Clouds may be around his path, but he will break through them all and shine forth; but never, never again on me. Oh that I had been his sister! then he might have been angry with me, he might have chided me; but when I wept he would have taken me back to his heart. Now I am nothing to him—all the light and the strength have gone from my life. What do I say? Have I not the light and the strength of Heaven? Is it so? Have I been making to myself an idol, and has a righteous judgment separated between me and him? Father! I am a feeble child, help me to say, 'Thy will be done.'"

Two days afterwards Alice wrote, "I have never seen him since—I shall never see him more; and now his sister has gone. She came once after that evening to see me; I fancied she was a little cold at first, and from some things she said, I think she imagines that I have refused him, and that this has separated us. It is like his generous nature to let this be thought rather than reveal what he believes to be the truth against me. Ah! will he

ever know the truth? Sometimes I try to hope he may; that this poor, weak spirit, haunted by the insane fear of a man like himself, may re-remember my agony of supplication, and may yet do me justice; and what then? Can the flowers which have been so ruthlessly crushed, revive? How empty the world seems. A little while ago it seemed such unspeakable happiness to have Charles back, and now I long to get away from him and from my mother; even daddy Cato wearies me with his affection. Oh, that I could shut my eyes upon them all, to open them where no human love or hate, not even his, could trouble me! But this is very sinful. Forgive, Thou who art more pitiful than man!"

CHAPTER IV.

"Every one his love-feat will advance
Unto his several mistress."

"Her gentle spirit
Commits itself to yours to be directed
As from her lord, her governor, her king.
Myself and what is mine, to you and yours
Is now converted."

"GOING South, at this season!" exclaimed Mr. Gaston and Ellen; "going in the summer or when summer is so fast approaching, to the land of fevers!"

"But, I want to be warm once more," says poor, shivering, Mrs. Montrose; "and we are going to the sea-coast, and Alice will not stay long; she will soon be travelling in Virginia with her cousin;" and so on the fourth of May they set out; a bleak, blustering day it was, a few flakes of snow even occasionally whirling in the air. But a few days bring them to another climate. They are in Baltimore, and here the air is soft and mild, though still not very warm. Mrs. Montrose is fatigued with her journey, and Charles proposes that they shall stop here for some days and rest and refresh

themselves, and Alice makes no objection; she objects to nothing, wishes nothing now; and Mrs. Montrose gladly consents, and so they stay. They found some difficulty in procuring rooms, for the hotels were already crowded with Southerners coming north for the summer. Scarcely had they taken possession of their rooms, when a party arrived from South Carolina. In the party were three children, the eldest a girl of ten years, the youngest a bright mischievous boy of little more than four, who exercised to the full the patience and activity of a somewhat corpulent coloured woman, whom he called "Ma'am Phebe," leaving his sisters to obtain whatever attention they needed from the governess. They were shown to rooms near those occupied by our party; and before the day had closed, Charles and the gentle Mrs. Montrose had their sympathies warmly excited for this governess, of whom they had caught only a glimpse as she flitted to and fro from room to room; and flitting she seemed continually to be. Now it was the coloured woman asking, "Do please, Miss Willson, try ef you can do any ting wid dis boy." Now, it was the lady herself, who wanted to know if Miss Willson could tell her anything about her keys, or where she had packed her jewellery box, or what *had* become of her purse.

"Poor thing!" said Mrs. Montrose, "she must be very weary; it is no wonder she walks with such a heavy step, light as her figure looks."

"Does it look light?" asked Charles. "I should like very much to see her; but I have had no opportunity of doing so, without seeming impertinent."

Charles did indeed wish to see her, for her name had recalled one, respecting whom he had vainly sought to obtain some information during the few days he had spent in or near Boston; for he had not forgotten, though the reader may have done so, the gentle Emily Willson, whom he had seen at Newport, nearly three years before.

"Where there's a will there's a way," is a well-known proverb, and Charles in the present instance proved its truth, for before the day closed he found a way of seeing Miss Willson without subjecting himself to the charge of impertinence. They met in the hall common to both their apartments as she was coming to hers, and he, apparently, going in an opposite direction to his mother's. A start, a quick flush, an apparent hesitation whether to recede or advance on her part, an eager exclamation of pleasure, a warm grasp of the hand he had never touched before on his, marked at once their remembrance and their forgetfulness; their re-

membrance of each other, their forgetfulness of how slight the acquaintance between them had been.

"My mother and sister will be delighted to see you," said Charles, endeavouring, perhaps to cover in this way, a little confusion at his own somewhat unauthorized delight, and forgetting that his mother had never seen her, "they are in this very room; permit me to tell them you are here." And without waiting her assent or denial, he opened the door, saying, "Mother, Alice, here is Miss Willson, whom you had the pleasure of meeting at Newport."

The ladies advanced; Mrs. Montrose wonderingly and Alice languidly, but when they saw the blushing and abashed girl, they were both cordial in their greetings. The two parties remained for ten days at Baltimore. Mrs. Moultrie, the lady to whose children Miss Willson was governess, was waiting the arrival of some friends from Washington, under whose care, during the absence of her husband, she was to travel, and the Montroses stayed because Charles wished it. It may be remembered, that in Newport he had admired the modest, gentle Emily, and had felt great pity for her, under the infliction of her uncle's ill-temper. Pity is proverbially akin to love, and where ad-

miration and pity mingle, it wants only a well-grounded esteem to make the love worthy and complete. Esteem can only be the result of knowledge, and Charles was determined, therefore, to make use of every opportunity for knowing Emily Willson, prepared, as he believed, to judge calmly and decide impartially on her merits. Calmness and impartiality are qualities, we believe, rarely exercised under such circumstances, and though Charles Montrose is somewhat of a favourite with us, we would by no means represent him as superior to the weaknesses common to man. At least, if he were calm and impartial, at first, we fear he ceased to be so before the expiration of the ten days, when Alice told him that Mrs. Moultrie, with whom Mrs. Montrose had sought an acquaintance, principally on Emily's account, had mentioned to her mother, *in confidence*, that Miss Willson had refused to marry a very wealthy young man of Boston, whom her rich uncle, Mr. Driscoll, had chosen as her husband; but that Mr. Driscoll, though excessively angry, would not have cast her off for this, if she would have promised him never to marry a naval officer, against which class Mr. Driscoll had most inveterate prejudices, and one of whom, he fancied, had attracted the attention of his niece, at

Newport, during a visit she had made there with him.

"And did Miss Willson plead guilty to this charge?" Mrs. Montrose had asked.

"Oh! you do not suppose I ever heard anything of this from Miss Willson? I had it from the friend who recommended Miss Willson to me," was the reply.

"And what did she think on the subject?"

"Well, she thought it was a little strange that Miss Willson should give up such expectations rather than make so simple a promise, if there were not some truth in Mr. Driscoll's imagination; though she added, that Miss Willson herself alleged that the death of her mother had removed the only reason that had induced her to bear the tyranny of her uncle so long."

This account, it will be perceived, presented to the mind of our friend Charles two very interesting subjects of speculation: were Mr. Driscoll's suspicions correct? and, if so, who was the naval officer referred to? These were problems he found it impossible satisfactorily to solve without the pretty Emily's help, and just a week after the day he had so unexpectedly met her in the hall leading to their respective rooms, he obtained an opportunity of gaining from her such information as she could give

on the subject, and if he did not consider the solution completely demonstrated, there was at least such an approximation to completeness as must have satisfied the requirements of every reasonable mind. Lovers are proverbially *unreasonable*, and it is probable that Charles would afterwards entertain doubts, and make new exactions on Emily's ability to elucidate these knotty questions, but for the present he seemed fully satisfied. To speak plainly, lest we should have any reader to whom the past illustration has been unintelligible, Charles Montrose and Emily Willson parted as those part whose future lives can know no separate good or evil. Emily was received at once to the heart of Mrs. Montrose, and Alice showed more interest in her promised sister than she had done in any thing or person for weeks past.

Charles would have persuaded Emily at once to leave her present situation of governess, but with a right principle, which he valued even while he murmured at its results, she said, that she must give Mrs. Moultrie time to supply her place should she leave her before the termination of her engagement, which would expire in the ensuing winter. On one thing Charles insisted ; their engagement must, he said, be at once made known. On being informed of it, Mrs. Moultrie, who, though indolent

and exacting, was neither unkind nor ungenerous, insisted that their marriage should take place from her house.

"She really loved Miss Willson," she said, "and though she should provide herself immediately, or as soon as possible, with another governess, she hoped to retain her with her as a friend till her marriage."

When Mrs. Moultrie left Baltimore, Charles made the discovery that his mother was quite sufficiently rested to proceed Southward. As the ten days spent at Baltimore was the only delay of any consequence on their journey, they arrived at Montrose Hall several days before that appointed for Isabelle's marriage. Their welcome was all a welcome should be. Some eyes, it is true, were moistened with tears, but smiles shone through the tears. Charles was, of course, the hero of the hour. He had left Montrose Hall a mere stripling; he had returned a man. He had been mourned as dead; and the tender thoughts which had clustered around his memory added to the joy of his reception. And next to Charles we think daddy Cato occupied the largest share of attention from the public of Montrose Hall. Neither Charles nor Alice had been silent in their letters upon his acts of faithful and generous services; and as the old

man shook hands with Mrs. Montrose, and Isabelle, and Mr. Dunbar, and Donald, each in turn expressed their esteem and their gratitude, until the old man was completely overpowered, and his face was wet with tears as he turned away from the little group on the piazza, to meet the larger number of his own colour, collected in the yard to welcome him. From this time forward Cato was a man of mark on the plantation. Even Agrippa vailed his honours in his presence, for what was his acquaintance with Savannah, in comparison with the larger experience of one who had been to Boston by sea, and returned by land, and who, as it soon began to be whispered about, had money out at interest in that far-away city?

Only Alice seemed out of harmony with the general joy, and yet she lacked not ready sympathy for each and all; but her face looked too pale and still, her eyes too dim, except when they reflected the smiles of others. For a few days she had felt not quite at ease with Donald, nor he with her. She had been afraid that now his mother had grown kind, he might consider all opposition to his former suit withdrawn, and renew it, and he saw her doubts, and hesitated to take the only step that could remove them. But Donald was no longer an impulsive, exacting boy; he had advanced many

degrees towards a true manhood in the last year. The third day after the arrival of Alice she entered the library in the early morning to seek a book. Seeing Donald there, she would have retreated; but he rose, and, advancing quickly, said, "Let me speak to you, Alice."

She returned immediately, and extended her hand to him as she said, "Good morning, Donald. I saw you were writing, and feared to disturb you."

He led her to a seat, and taking one near her, said, "Was your only fear that which you expressed just now, Alice?"

She coloured and remained silent.

"I have had a fear, too," he resumed. "I have feared since your return that, in pursuing too eagerly a dearer tie, I had lost the sisterly affection which has made so large a part of the happiness of my life. Is it so, Alice?"

"No, Donald; no!" And her eyes, which had drooped under his first address, now met his with the quiet confidence of truth. "If I have seemed cold, it has been only a little restraint; a little awkwardness from a doubt in what light you might regard our relations."

"Let that doubt be at rest, my dear cousin; and that it may be, I will say to you, that my mother's

opposition could have presented but a temporary barrier to my will, since I well knew that the feeling whence it sprung was too unreasonable to endure; that it would quickly yield, as it has done, to the remembrance of your many claims on her regard. But your own want of sympathy with my feelings, of which, at the hour of parting, you gave me unconsciously stronger proof than you had ever done before, presented a more invincible barrier. I saw that, amidst all the sadness of parting, you experienced relief from the withdrawal of my claims on you; and I resolved, Alice, that they never should again distress you. Improbable as my fancies of a happier future might have been, baseless as my hopes were, you know little of the human heart, if you think that I made an easy, or valueless sacrifice in surrendering them. Do I not deserve from you some reward? May I not ask that you will give me the sweet, sisterly trust of olden time?"

"I will, Donald; indeed I will!" placing her hand in his as she spoke, and leaving it there while she added, "I am very much obliged to you for this explanation; it has made me a great deal happier."

Donald could not quite suppress a little sigh; if that sigh proved that the surrender of hopes and

fancies had not been complete, it detracted nothing from the generosity of his present conduct.

As if to show that his own trust was just what it had been in other days, Donald said, "I was just writing to our friend Robert Grahame; he has been a friend indeed. I suppose Isabelle or Mr. Dunbar wrote you that through his generous intervention we were freed from the clutches of that miser, Goldwire; and now, on hearing of Isabelle's intended marriage, he has released her property from the claim given by the mortgage. Do you remember, Alice, what bitter diatribes we used to utter against Yankees in our ignorant childhood? How little my father could ever have dreamed that a Yankee manufacturer would have preserved his children from ruin, and a Yankee merchant have been your most liberal friend and champion, as Charles tells me Mr. Gaston has been.

"He has, indeed," said Alice; but even while she spoke, her mind was busy with the first part of Donald's communication. How could Robert Grahame have done all this? It may be remembered, that Donald only became acquainted with Robert Grahame's change of circumstances at his own house at Springfield; that even then he did not know the full extent of that change; that from this visit he returned home only to see his father

die, and to become immediately involved in such painful personal interests as drove from his mind all reference to the good or ill fortune of others. From Mary Grahame, Alice had learned that her brother had at last accomplished his life's task in the payment of his father's creditors; that he was gone abroad on business; and afterwards at a short interview in Boston, when Mary was on the eve of sailing she also heard from her that the business had been successful, and that her brother had written for her to join him. When they afterwards met at Cambridge, she saw no change in the simple habits of the lady and gentleman to lead her to suspect any great change of fortune. If the dress was of more elegant material, the coat of finer cloth, she did not notice it, in the absorption of her own happy thoughts; and now, after long study, she could only solve the question of how he had done all this, by a reference to what she had heard in former times of the worth of his name in the market. If she could have brought herself to pronounce that name, Donald would have cleared away all that seemed mysterious, but she dared not trust her voice with it.

And now, the day and hour had come for Isabelle, which is the most pregnant with good or evil in the life of woman—the hour which intro-

duces her to new cares and new responsibilities, to meet whose pressure, Heaven has provided her with new incentives and new supports. And yet, to this solemn hour, how many walk with gay, untroubled hearts, and eyes that look not beyond the bright season of healthy, happy youth. Life is to them but a May-day festival—their life-companion but one who can pass gracefully and agreeably through its merry hours. Sad sight must this be to the angels. Sad sight it is to every one whose eyes have been opened to the awful mysteries of life.

Ah! let the young remember that trial is before them, and choose one to attend them in the encounter, who, amidst the tempest and the darkness, can look to the everlasting light, and walk with assured steps and unflinching heart—temptation is approaching, let them be assured that their guide has wisdom to shun, or strength to resist its assaults —sorrow is at hand, let them see to it that they have secured a friend whose heart is open to gentle and generous sympathies—last, not least, having secured all this, let them know that the guide, companion, friend, is still but mortal, and let them examine their own hearts, and try whether the feeling they find there be one which can bear patiently the caprices of temper, which will not be

alienated by the injustice of a day, which, should age or disease steal its graces from the form, and—direst woe of all woes—lay its distorting or paralyzing touch upon the mind itself, will only acquire from the change a deeper tenderness—a more devoted fidelity—then, let them approach the altar, not with worldly fripperies, or worldly sentimentalities, but remembering that the place whereon they stand is holy, let them come with the reverence due to a religious rite—to a vow taken in the presence of the HOLIEST.

Thus came Isabelle. The marriage had many witnesses—it could not be otherwise in the country, in that land of warm social feelings—many witnesses within the house, and on the piazza, still more, whose dark faces expressed an eager interest in the scene which the windows, left open on purpose, revealed to them. Her dress, by the earnest wish of Donald, and the care of her mother, was both elegant and costly, yet the flowing satin robe, the veil of finest Brussels, which fell so gracefully around her, were scarcely seen; nor was it the uncommon brilliancy of her beauty that eclipsed them, for, sooth to say, in the early part of the evening, at least, that beauty lacked something of its accustomed glow. It was rather the new character given to her face by the sentiment under

If I may not trust in his honour, then life is sadder than death."

She was determined; and the gentlemen at length felt that "a wilfu' woman maun hae her way;" and the instrument was accordingly prepared, duly signed, attested, and delivered to Isabelle's keeping, the day before her marriage.

Neither Isabelle nor Major Wharton were willing to encounter the festivities which they well knew would be pressed upon them by their hospitable friends on their marriage. They had accordingly made all their arrangements for setting out on the summer tour, on which Alice would accompany them, on the very day succeeding that event.

Isabelle and Alice had appeared at breakfast in their travelling dresses. Breakfast was now over; the carriages were at the door which were to convey them to Savannah; Alice had withdrawn to her room, to put on her bonnet and say a few parting words to her mother; Isabelle also withdrew, but only to the library, whither Donald accompanied her, at her request. They were standing at a window talking earnestly—Isabelle looking flushed and anxious—Donald smiling—when Major Wharton entered the room.

"Wharton," cried Donald, laughingly, before Major Wharton had time to speak, "I shall begin

mischievous expression of a child who has found the way to plague a cross nurse, she said, "Do not wait for me, I want to say a few words *on business* to Mr. Clarke and Mr. Symonds.

She was left alone with them, and immediately inquired of Mr. Symonds, whether she had a perfect and entire right, by that instrument, to dispose of her whole income.

"Certainly," was the answer, "perfect and entire."

"Suppose I choose to give it all away?"

"No one can hinder you."

"Then I want you, Mr. Symonds, to draw up whatever paper is necessary to give the sole and entire control over this income to Major Wharton during my life."

"But"—began Mr. Symonds.

"Excuse me," said Isabelle; "I have not time to listen to any buts; only draw up such a paper and do everything which is necessary to give it force, and keep what you do a secret, for the present, from all but my mother and my brother."

Mr. Clarke would have remonstrated; but she said, "I admit all your reasonings, Mr. Clarke, but they apply to silly girls, marrying untried boys, or men of whom they know nothing. Major Wharton's life has not been passed in a corner; it has been seen and judged of all, and of all approved.

which I think it possible for you to ask that I would not do."

"And there is nothing else I so much desire," said Isabelle, gathering courage from the very intensity of that desire. "Oh, do not deny me! I cannot be quite happy till I feel that

> "Myself and what is mine, to you and yours,
> Is now converted;'"

quoting from that avowal of affection which approves itself to all, as the most delicate and dignified ever made by woman.

"My wife! My generous wife!"

"Let that name plead for me," whispered Isabelle: "surely we can have no separate interest. Are you afraid that you shall cease to love me one day, and that I shall have to look to this vile dross for consolation?"

What Major Wharton answered, or how Isabelle prevailed, we know not; but prevail she did. Very imprudent! exclaims some sage reader, as he reflects on the changes both of fortune and of feeling, wrought by time. Very imprudent, we respond, and not at all intended as an example for young ladies in general, but too characteristic of Isabelle Wharton, and of Southern nature, to be omitted in its representation.

CHAPTER V.

"One, not easily jealous, but, being wrought,
Perplexed in the extreme."

"Unkindness may do much;
And his unkindness may defeat my life,
But never taint my love."

BEAUTIFUL were heaven and earth on that bright May morning, to those who looked on them from Montrose Hall. The cypress grove and its white gleaming tablets had not passed away from the scene, but beyond and around them the earth was gay with flowers, and the waters sparkled brightly, and from the blue heaven above them fell a flood of golden light, alike upon the homes of the living and the dead.

Even the pale face of Alice looked less sad this morning. She was feeling somewhat of that elevation in which the most desolate heart at times rejoices—in which, having despaired of what we call happiness, we begin to experience some of that blessedness which results from living out of ourselves. Too often is it with the human heart as

with the scorpion, which, begirt by fire, is said to sting itself to death—too often do we, when surrounded by fiery trials, turn upon ourselves the energies of thought and feeling which, if expended upon others, would win repose for us. To-day, then, Alice rejoiced that the world was beautiful, and that some in it were happy; that the sun shone, that flowers blossomed and streams sparkled, and that Isabelle had found her earthly place of rest and shelter in the true heart of Major Wharton.

She was ready for the carriage, and stood with her mother and aunt and Donald in the piazza, waiting only for Isabelle. Suddenly, as she turned to speak to Donald, she perceived that his eyes were fixed on some distant object, and following their direction, she saw several negroes coming slowly towards the house, bearing a man, who, from the entire relaxation of his frame, seemed devoid of life. As they drew near, Donald went forth to meet them and to make some inquiries respecting him whom they were bearing.

"We find 'um to de road-side, Maussa," said one of the men; "an' uncle Cato is tell we for bring 'um here."

"Are you sure you are not bringing us some drunken vagabond?" asked Donald.

"Ouw, Maussa—you tink we no know drunken man? Bro' Jem here ought to know any how."

"Hi, Sambo! you got sich a big mout'—can't you hol' 'um till we git de dead man out of we han'," said Jem in a whisper which was quite as distinct as a louder tone would have been.

"Why! is he dead?" and Donald looked more attentively at the stranger, but could see his face very imperfectly from the position in which he lay in the arms of his bearers.

"No, Maussa—him no dead; dat jis' Jem talk."

Donald stayed not to question farther, but hastened before them into the house to beg that his mother would have a bed prepared below stairs for this poor sick stranger. Accordingly a small room in the rear of the house was by the order of Mrs. John Montrose made ready for his reception, and there he was immediately borne; and Donald, as soon as he had handed Alice to the carriage and shaken hands with her and Isabelle and Major Wharton, went to see what could be done for him. Scarcely had he entered the room and looked upon his unbidden guest, when, uttering an exclamation of surprise, he hastened back to the piazza, and calling one of the men who was preparing slowly to return to his work in the field, from which he had been called as one of the bearers of the sick man;

he ordered him to saddle a horse and ride instantly for Dr. Jenkins. "Gallop every step of the way; and as you ride back call at Mr. Clarke's and at Mr. Symonds', and beg them to come here directly —do not lose a moment—if they are here in good time, you shall have a dollar." Then, turning to his mother whom his voice had drawn to the piazza, he said: "Mother, send for Mr. Dunbar, we may want him for a witness. This sick man is Richard Grahame whom we supposed dead; if he live, or even revive sufficiently to give his testimony before Mr. Symonds, who is a magistrate—George Browne may yet be compelled to disgorge his ill-gotten gains."

From the piazza, Donald entered the library. It had suddenly occurred to him that Robert Grahame ought to be informed as soon as possible of his brother's sudden appearance, and of his present condition.

"Wait until you hear the physician's opinion of his case," said Mrs. Montrose.

"Whatever that opinion may be, his brother ought to know what has occurred this morning. He may revive, and yet this illness prove ultimately fatal: in that case, if his brother and sister desire to see him once more, a day may be everything to them; and I shall gain a day by writing imme-

diately and sending my letter after Wharton, who will be easily overtaken by a man on horseback. By doing this, it will be in Savannah in time for this evening's Northern mail. But, mother, he may be exhausted for want of nourishment."

"Your aunt thought of that at once, and I left her preparing some gruel, to which I advised her to add a little wine. I will see how he is after taking it."

Mrs. Montrose left the room as she spoke, but returned in a few minutes with an encouraging report. The sick man had swallowed several spoonfuls of the gruel—the first with difficulty, the last more easily; and Mrs. Charles Montrose thought he looked less death-like. "Your aunt and Cato are both busied about him."

And in their hands we shall leave him, while we give the reader a rapid sketch of the circumstances which had brought him into a condition to require their care.

As soon as George Browne had matured his plans for his robbery of Donald Montrose, his first care was to remove the only man whose testimony could in the least degree affect his proceedings. In the first contemplation of these proceedings, he had sometimes thought of revealing his whole plan to Richard Grahame, and making him a sharer in its

profits and its dangers; but after the outbreak of passionate resentment on the part of Grahame at the time of his surrendering his note to him and receiving Donald's in exchange, he had considered the hazard of such a revelation as too great to be counterbalanced by any advantages that might be derived from the co-operation of one so weak and vacillating. But if not a friend and partner, Grahame could be a dangerous enemy, and he must be removed. George Browne was a selfish, unprincipled lover of pleasure, determined to indulge that love at any expense; but he was not naturally cruel. His ends must be accomplished, but it should be done by as gentle spiriting as possible; at any rate, there need be no murder in the business—he wanted no skeleton to stand in Egyptian fashion at his feasts. Many plans suggested themselves to him by which to insure the life-long absence of his former friend. Among the rest, he speculated upon the possibility of making the dictator Francia his keeper, by getting him introduced into that land from which no stranger was permitted to return. While this plan occupied his mind, he met at a gaming-table with a Portuguese, commanding a ship sailing to Valparaiso. He questioned him respecting Francia—stated hypothetically such a case as he was contemplating, and demanded in a

jocular tone if Francia would not make a good jailer for this man. The Portuguese shook his head—he knew surer ways than that.

"The knife or the bullet," said George Browne.

"No, neither knife nor bullet, nor anything else that could touch the life; he would engage for five hundred dollars to put a man where he could live, and not badly either, "provided he does not care for society," he said with a grim smile, and yet where he would be as little likely to be ever heard of again as if he had been consigned to the grave.

This was just what George Browne desired, and the arrangement was soon completed. Richard Grahame, really desirous to escape from the associations whose influence he was too weak to resist, readily embraced an offer from Browne to go to Valparaiso on business for the firm with which his worthless name was still associated from respect for his father. Browne even succeeded in getting the signature of the firm to a letter of credit to a considerable amount, on a house with which they transacted business in Valparaiso; and furnished with this, which he had good reason to believe would never be presented, he had the pleasure of seeing his victim depart, and four or five months after, according to his agreement with the Portu-

guese, he received Valparaiso papers containing an advertisement of his death, which papers he forwarded with a letter of condolence to the brother and sister of Richard Grahame.

The reader needs not to be told that the companion of Charles Montrose on the desolate island in the Pacific was Richard Grahame. The Peruvians who had engaged to carry him to Valparaiso were true to their trust, and he arrived there safely. The letter of credit had been preserved, and was still in his possession, but he dared not present it. It would convey to George Browne the information that he was still alive, and this, his excited fancy suggested, would be the signal for new plots and new treacheries. Still that letter was of use to him. It corroborated his tale to the United States Consul, and together with the report of the Peruvian boatmen, seemed to place it beyond doubt. Through the Consul he obtained employment as a clerk in a commercial house. He was well paid and he spent little. To get money enough to return home was his great desire, and yet he had an almost invincible reluctance to the sea. His soul was haunted by two furies—George Browne and the sea. To retrace the steps by which he had come thither seemed to him for many months impossible. He really contemplated what Charles Montrose had

jestingly asserted of him, endeavouring to make his way home by land. At length, however, when he had been eight months in Valparaiso, an American captain, sailing from the port of Boston, interested in the relation given of his adventures by the Consul, sought his acquaintance, and when he was leaving Valparaiso on his return voyage, offered him a free passage to Boston. It was a rare opportunity, and yet he could scarcely bring himself to accept it, so powerful was the morbid apprehension of which we have spoken. "At least come on board and see us," said his friend. He went, accompanied by the Consul. The crew were Massachusetts men, all, and the familiar tones and habits asserted their power; he seemed already within the safe guardianship of home institutions when with them, and sailed. His exposure in his island abode had been in no slight degree injurious to his health, and though the equable climate of Valpariaso had seemed to restore him, it had probably made him less able to withstand the severities of a winter voyage on the bleak coast of North America. As they made the cold northern latitudes, he became ill. The doses of his friend the captain were by no means homœopathic, and he arrived in Boston suffering and enfeebled. He was at home, and yet from nothing did he shrink so much as from the

sight of an acquaintance. The fear of George Browne had grown into an insane terror. It gave to the object of his dread complete power over his life: he would make any pledge which would satisfy George Browne that he need not fear any disclosures from him. Until he had seen Browne, and had thus secured himself from his persecutions, his arrival, his continued existence, must be a carefully guarded secret, and he must live as economically as possible upon the money brought with him from Valparaiso. Especially would he conceal himself from his stern, severe brother, and from his too perfect sister. They could have no sympathy with such fears as his; what could they know of them? they had never had the idea of the fearful power of this man, as it were, burnt into their souls, by the agony of such an awakening as his upon that lonely island, in the midst of that vast and silent sea. And having no sympathy with him, they could have no indulgence for him. They would insist, doubtless, upon his doing what they had good reason to suspect he could do, to enforce justice to the Montrose family. No, it would be better, far better, that they should never hear of him again. What had he to do with the Montroses? let them take care of themselves.

Under the influence of such feelings, he assumed

the name of Green, and took lodgings with Mrs. Martin, in an obscure street, distant from all his former haunts, determined to see and be seen by no one connected with his former life, at least until he had satisfied his dreaded foe that he had no reason to fear him. Especially would he have avoided every Montrose—Charles, because his imprudent confidence, as Richards, in the intimate companionship of their island abode, might lead to a detection of his true name and character—the rest, because they might make an appeal to his conscience which he would find it difficult to withstand.

And to this had the feeble spirit, rendered feebler still by unceasing self-indulgence, been brought—clinging to life, when life had become one long continued terror—clinging to it with such tenacity as to sacrifice for its preservation from a fancied peril everything dear to honour and to conscience.

But a cold increased his illness, and taught him that his life might be endangered, from causes against which no human vigilance could guard. In the quiet of his sick room the voice of conscience was heard, and "Do unto others as ye would that others should do unto you," and "Be not ye therefore partakers" with the children of

disobedience, were precepts which seemed ever to stand between his soul and the only hope which is valued in such an hour. And just at this time it was that Mrs. Martin brought him the miniature likeness of Colonel Montrose, left as a pledge by Alice. No wonder he was agitated by seeing it. It seemed the visible direction of heaven; the "Do this and you shall live." He dared not disregard it; and yet, the manner in which he obeyed, strikingly portrayed his feeble, vacillating and fearful nature. First he would see this Miss Montrose, whom he supposed to be the sister of Donald—see her where—not even Mrs. Martin should know anything of the interview—and ascertain the condition of her family, and learn, if possible, whether the poverty which had reduced her to her present condition, of a worker for her daily bread, were the result of George Browne's fraud. Then, when he found another interview necessary, he willingly suffered—nay, he encouraged Mrs. Martin's false impressions of his object—caring more for his own possible danger than for the delicacy and dignity of the pure-hearted girl, who, but for Mrs. Martin's broad insinuations, would never probably have dreamed that her womanly reserve could have been called in question, by her compliance with his request. And when she had met

him—when he had learned all, and all urged on him a full avowal of what he knew to the Montrose family, as the only course sanctioned by honour and honesty — he determined that the avowal should only be made when he was far from Boston, where George Browne was now daily expected, as he had learned by inquiries made for him by the friendly captain with whom he had returned. His plan was to go to Montrose Hall, under the shelter of its roof, to offer his testimony to the truth, and to take such legal measures to secure himself from the enmity of Browne as would make any attack from him, however covert, doubly dangerous to his foe—to whom it would at once point suspicion. With all that obstinacy by which this half insane condition of mind is characterized, Richard Grahame clung to this plan, against all the pleadings of his own heart, and the almost agonized entreaties of Alice, when his brother became a witness of their interview. Alice, as we have said, had not dreamed of impropriety in that interview, and she could scarcely herself have told what it was in that one flashing glance of Robert Grahame, which made her feel, in an instant, that there was no place, no hope for her thenceforth, till she could tell him who was her companion, and wherefore she had met him. But the promise had been given, that this revela-

tion should never be made by her to any, without the permission of him who held in his hands, as she believed, the fortunes of those to whom she owed the happiness, the repose of nearly all her life. True, she was now sacrificing more than life for them, but the generous mind stays not to compute the value of the returns made to benefits freely bestowed.

Secretly, Richard Grahame left Boston, not by sea, but by land; travel by which to Georgia was, fifteen years ago, a more expensive and slower affair than now. He was detained by increased illness on the way; his little stock of money was exhausted; his journey was finished on foot; and, debilitated by illness and worn out with fatigue, he sank, at the very moment he reached the goal, into unconsciousness, and, as those who first found him supposed, into death. He had walked the day before from Savannah to a public house ten miles distant from Montrose Hall, with a valise in his hand. His supper and night's lodging left him penniless, and he started at day-break the next morning, without breakfast, and was already in sight of the Hall, when he fainted at the road-side.

And quite unconscious of the influence which he had exercised, and might yet exercise upon the

happiness of her life, Alice had seen that almost lifeless body carried by her, and with only the pity which distress of any kind awakened in her heart, had taken her seat in the carriage and proceeded on her journey. Isabelle's maid, a young negress, was in the carriage with her mistress and Alice, which arrangement compelled Major Wharton and Charles, who was on his way to Washington, to follow them in a gig. The messenger of Donald delivered his letter to Major Wharton without being even seen by the ladies, so that nothing occurred to awaken suspicion in the mind of Alice of any connection between Richard Grahame and the sick traveller.

The presence of the servant forbade any confidential conversation between Isabelle and Alice, yet we doubt not the thoughts of both were sometimes, on this journey, busy with the contrast of the present with the past. Three years ago they had travelled over the same road, with hearts bounding high with hope, and imaginations all on fire. The world had seemed to them then full of enchantments; a fairy land in which pleasures should succeed each other in infinite variety. What seemed it now? To Isabelle, a scene of mingled good and ill, on which, from the safe seclusion of the bower that love had built, she

might look with a heart full of gratitude to Heaven for her own happy lot, and of pity for the sorrows of those less favoured. To Alice it was a place of trial and of duty, with light and hope falling upon it from Heaven only.

A few pages from the journal of Alice will give all that we need to know of their life at the Virginia Springs:—

July 12th.—This place is not in the least like the moated Grange, and yet, like Mariana, "I am a-weary, weary," and sometimes my impatient, wilful spirit, is ready to add, "I would that I were dead." To look on and see others laboriously pursuing gaieties which seem to you as vapid and inane as a child's babble is very tiresome. To see people happy, as Isabelle and Major Wharton are happy, elevates and rejoices me; to see people gay, as nine-tenths of the people here are gay, makes me very sad. I have a fancy that most of them are haunted by some dead hope, from which they are striving to escape by all these violent exertions. We are living in one of the pretty little cottages by which the grounds are dotted, but take all our meals at the hotel, except breakfast. This, Rose prepares for us. Major Wharton has many friends here, and Isabelle is greatly admired. Never, indeed, was she so beautiful. The pride of her

nature is not lost, but it is subdued by her willing submission to one. What was haughtiness is now only a modest dignity. I now understand the source of that bitter, hard, mocking spirit, which seemed to take possession of her from the time of our northern visit. She believed that she had been sought for the amusement of an idle hour, and thrown off and forgotten when this was past, and her pride rose up in arms against that which would have crushed a feebler principle; and believing that Major Wharton had done this—he who seemed so high in honour—she could feel no farther confidence in man. Her father and Mr. Dunbar, she says, were all that stood between her and utter misanthropy and despair. I have tried to make her except Donald and William Clarke; but she says no; she did not and could not hate them, but she pitied, and, she is afraid, despised them, as dupes to greater villains. But sorrow softened her heart; and first her sympathy for Donald, and then her solicitude respecting the negroes, opened new springs of feeling, and she acknowledges that from the time she began to try to teach the plantation school she grew happier. Our little cottage has only one sitting-room, and the conversation in which she made this last admission to me passed one afternoon when Major

Wharton was present, but, as we supposed, too much engaged in some business letters to be the wiser for our low-toned speech; but he heard it, nevertheless, I think; for, having occasion to leave the room soon after, when I came back, entering at a door just behind where Bella sat, I found Major Wharton leaning over her chair, and heard her say, in that sweet, clear voice of hers, so distinct, even in its lowest tones, "Not happy as I am now; only learning to rejoice more in the power of making others happier." I stole softly out again, but not before I had seen him draw her head gently back, till it rested on his bosom, and, bending over, press his lips softly to her forehead. Happy Bella!

July 13th.—I hope I did not repine yesterday at Bella's happiness; I have the same resource which she once had—"I can rejoice in the power of making others happier." I long to be back again at the Hall. I think my aunt rather wishes us to stay there, now that she does not fear that Donald will ever marry me; and I will devote myself more than I ever did before to the negroes. I think, perhaps, my Heavenly Father has meant to prepare me for a missionary to them. I have a hundred plans for usefulness among them, and I do not fear any opposition to these plans. I know

that Donald feels very anxious about them himself. Oh, that I were there, and at work! it might still this dull, heavy pain at my heart.

5 P.M.—If I wished to be at Montrose Hall this morning, how much more earnestly do I desire it now. What shall I do? How can I stay here and meet *him*, and have *him* look at me with such cold, strange eyes? It kills me; oh, that it would indeed kill me! No, no; this is wicked. Heaven forgive me for the feeling!

9 P.M.—Mr. Gaston has been to see me. He says he left Mary with Ellen, and he came here with Mr. Grahame, whom a gentleman had made an appointment to meet here on business. He says they will have to stay some days, as they set off with the intention of making a visit to an old friend of his in Richmond, and finding him absent, came to this, their next point of destination, though the day of appointment was nearly a week distant. And so by these chances we have been brought together again—chances! are there such things? And yet, why should this be? What have I done to deserve such suffering—to deserve that the dull pain should become a quick, sharp agony, an intolerable agony?

How dare he suspect me of any conduct which would excuse his harshness? It is he who should

shrink and cower before me, not I before him. He shrink! he cower! How strange the words look, in reference to him! Yet if he have a giant's strength, should he therefore use it like a giant? And then that courtesy! that exquisite courtesy! How I hate it! He will repent it all one day, perchance, when his brother tells him all; but then I may be mad, or in my——

Here the journal ended abruptly; as it was not continued for many days, we must again resume the narrative which was interrupted for its introduction. We commence at the point at which it breaks off.

Ole Bull was giving one of his delightful concerts at the Springs this evening, and Alice feeling too wretched to enjoy even his music, had prevailed on Isabelle to leave her in one of the cottages which, at distances of from fifty to one hundred and fifty yards from the large hotel, dotted the lawn around the Springs. These cottages were so near that each seemed to derive protection from the others, and as it was rarely that all were deserted, no idea of fear or loneliness suggested itself to Alice when her friends left her, with many charges to Rose from her mistress to see that "Miss Alice" wanted nothing. Alice was quite sure that she should want nothing but to be alone. She was in that

state of nervous irritability when reason seems tottering, and we feel that the inquisitive glance or the careless word of another may push it from its throne, or may at least so overpower our self-command, that though we may reason sanely we shall act madly. The presence of Rose was, under such circumstances, an insupportable *gène*, and she persuaded her—an easy task—to go to the hotel and listen to the music, and see the company which the unusual attraction offered by the violin of Ole Bull had gathered, including the residents at the cottages as well as those who had their rooms at the hotel. She had been gone about a quarter of an hour, and Alice sat writing, as we have seen, when an impression that some one was near her, though she saw no shadow, heard no step, made her turn her head quickly, and with a feeling rather of annoyance than of fear, she saw a man entering the little parlour. The parlour being but dimly lighted by the single candle on her writing table, she rose to receive her unexpected and unwelcome guest, and recognized, as he advanced, George Browne. This was a great, and not an agreeable surprise. They had last met at Newport, and her associations with his name since that time had not been such as to inspire confidence or excite affection.

The freedom of his salutation, therefore, as, seizing her hand, he attempted to draw her to him, exclaiming, "Dear Alice! how I have longed for this interview! how impatiently I have watched for an opportunity of seeing you alone!" both astonished and offended her. She extricated her hand from his clasp, and, drawing herself up somewhat proudly, curtsied distantly, and remained standing as if waiting to hear the object of his visit.

His face flushed; but if it were with anger, he did not betray it in his words when he next spoke.

"Alice!" he cried, "do not treat me thus distantly; do not act as if you were unconscious of the only motive that could have brought me here."

"You must pardon me," said Alice, "if I act as I feel. I am ignorant—wholly ignorant of your motive."

In our Western prairies, they say, it is the custom to fight fire with fire; and thus the fire in the bosom of Alice, which had made her unable to bear the presence even of Rose, had been combated by that which the very appearance of Browne, associated as he was with the desolation of her home and the severest trials of her life, had kindled, and which the freedom of his manner fanned to a fiercer heat. From this contest between two op-

posing, yet not dissimilar, agents, sprang an outward calmness and self-possession for which Browne was entirely unprepared, and which, perhaps, astonished even herself.

"Is this a pretty affectation, Alice?" said Browne, "or have you really been blind to that which your sex generally see so quickly? Have you not seen, Alice, that from the first hour I saw you, I have had no desire so strong, no motive so powerful over my life, as the hope—dare I call it a hope—of winning you?"

He spoke slowly, somewhat hesitatingly, as if either under the influence of strong emotion himself, or willing to give Alice time to understand him and herself in this new relation. Perhaps he expected some agitation on her part—some exultation of vanity at such a conquest, or at least some bashful trepidation; but again, without hesitation, without even the rising of a blush, Alice answered, "I certainly have not seen it; nor could I have conjectured that the feeling you avow would have led you to the course you have pursued towards those whom I loved most dearly of all the world."

"And yet, Alice, if you will listen to me without that freezing manner, I will show you that the course you condemn towards them was the result,

solely the result of love to you—nay, hear me out; hear me vow, as I do now, that if you will but be mine, my first act, as your husband, shall be to do the most full and entire justice to all for whose interests you are solicitous. For their sakes, then, Alice, if not for my own, hear me!"

"No, no! it is impossible!" cried Alice, shrinking from him, as he drew near her and attempted to take her hand, agitated for the first time, as he thus appealed to her generous affections.

"Impossible? I ask only that you should hear me; and that you find impossible for them?"

"No! not that, if that be all, but—"

"But, you would say, you cannot hear me, because to do so would give me a hope you can never confirm. Is it not so?"

"It is."

"But do you not see, Alice, that while you labour under such false impressions of my character, you cannot with any justice decide my cause. Give me an opportunity to appear before you as I am; let me at least feel that I may win your esteem, your friendship, and you shall yourself dictate my future course."

This was but an act of justice, which Alice could not refuse, and she said, "It would not be right in me to do anything that would encourage the feel-

ings you just now talked of; but I should be very unjust, very wicked, if I were not glad to hear anything that would make me think more kindly of a cousin."

"I must necessarily detain you for some time, Alice, for I have much to say, and I would not, if I can help it, be found here by your cousin and Major Wharton, while they entertain their present impressions. It is to avoid a meeting with them that I have kept myself so carefully concealed while watching, for days past, for an opportunity to speak to you alone. When you have told them what I shall tell you, I will not shrink from them; but now, will you not give me an opportuity of speaking to you, without the fear of interruption from them, by walking out with me; we need not go far from the house, not out of call—" He saw that Alice still hesitated, and added, "I will tell you the truth, Alice, I know Major Wharton's feelings to me—his fiery nature. I cannot trust myself. I would avoid all danger of a collision, that might be fatal to one or both, by shunning him at present."

"I will go," said Alice shuddering at the very thought of such danger, and as if she could not too quickly place herself beyond its reach, she moved at once towards the door.

"Take a shawl and bonnet, Alice, the evening

[illegible] time enough to get them, [illegible] of immediate interruption."

[illegible] in the adjoining room, lay a light [illegible] which Alice had worn, in [illegible] to dinner at the hotel. To throw [illegible] and rejoin her cousin in the parlour, was [illegible] a moment. They left the house im- [illegible] offered her his arm. Alice hesitated [illegible] said, "Alice, do not treat [illegible] remember we are cousins [illegible]"—and Alice, half vexed with herself [illegible] own want of kindness and confidence, [illegible] his arm. As he pressed it with pas- [illegible] to his side. Did she feel the exulting [illegible] Ah! had she done this, [illegible] the triumph flashing in his eyes, it [illegible] perchance, have been too late.

Alice, as we have said, was vexed by her own want of kindness and confidence. She accused herself of injustice, and such self-accusation is ever the strongest bond in a generous nature. One less timid than Alice might well have felt some uneasiness, as her companion, turning away from both cottages and the hotel, hurried on with rapid strides and in perfect silence; yet, for some minutes, whatever she may have felt, she betrayed no apprehension. At length, however, as she found that they

were near the end of the lawn, and would soon enter a belt of wood, which looked black and gloomy under the dim star-light, she strove to check their advance, saying "There surely is no necessity for going farther—none can either see or hear us here!"

"Only a few steps further," said Browne, as he drew her on. There was something in his tone, his manner, that made Alice endeavour to snatch her arm from his and escape, while she cried, "Release me, sir, or my cries shall alarm my friends!"

"It is rather late for that now, my pretty Alice. Thanks to Ole Bull, there are none near enough to hear you. What! you will not go; then I must carry you, and stop that sweet voice too, for fear of stragglers;" and as he spoke, he threw her shawl hastily over her head, and would have lifted her in his arms, but, with a sudden spring, Alice eluded his clasp, and, throwing off the shawl, said, "Tell me what you wish, and I will do it, but do not touch me, if you would not have me die at your feet."

"Will you make this engagement, Alice, in good faith—that you will go quietly and without resistance, if I leave you free?"

"I will—I will—only let me be free, from even a touch, and I will make no effort to help myself, but will leave my deliverance to God!"

"Be it so, then. It is painful to me, Alice, to constrain you in anything; I would only remove you, for a time, from those who would embitter your prejudices against me; only accompany me without resistance, and in all else you shall be my ruler."

"I am ready." He offered his arm again. "No, not a touch," she said, shrinking back.

"Go on, then," he said, "I will follow you;" but even as he spoke he vowed that the time should come when he would repay scorn with scorn.

A few steps more and they were in the dark shadow of the woods; another minute, and carriage wheels passed rapidly over the sandy road beyond, while, in another direction, the closing strains of Ole Bull's wild melody floated on the air, and the enraptured plaudits of his auditors broke again and again the stillness of the night. Then group after group came forth from that crowded room, and pursued their way to their cottage homes, chatting gayly of the evening's entertainment. Isabelle and Major Wharton, Mr. Gaston, and Robert Grahame, formed one of these groups, and Isabelle walked, not at her husband's side, strange to say, but at that of Robert Grahame, and conversed with him in tones so low that, though Major Wharton followed so near them that he drew at one time more

closely around the throat of Isabelle the scarf she had thrown over her shoulders, neither he nor Mr. Gaston, who accompanied him, heard one word they said. They doubtless did not listen, as we shall ask the reader to do.

"If I understand your brother's letter aright, I have been most unjust to your cousin—unjust and harsh—"

"Harsh to Alice! Is that possible?"

"Do you think she can forgive me?"

"She can and will, I have no doubt, but I fear I cannot. Of course you could not be expected to feel to Alice as we do who have known her all her life, and who love her so dearly; but there is something about her which I have always thought would inspire even a stranger with confidence and with gentleness."

"Do you think we are most gentle where we love most?" asked Robert Grahame, while a smile flitted across his grave features.

"Certainly," said Isabelle, unhesitatingly; "do not you!"

"Yes, we are most gentle, but we are also most stern; all our feelings are intensified by the fire of passion."

There was a moment's silence, and then Isabelle said, "I do not understand this business at all;

your brother, you say, who was supposed dead, has suddenly appeared at Montrose Hall; where has he been, and why does he come?"

"I cannot answer your question; your brother wrote in great haste, and I have only received his letters, both of them, this evening; they were forwarded to me from Boston. The first was only to inform me that my brother still lived."

"And the second?"

"Was written the next day, by Richard's urgent request, he being too ill to write himself. The object, though not very clearly expressed, was, I think, to convince me that I had done injustice to your cousin."

"How did he know that, if you have not seen him? and what was the injustice?" asked Isabelle, quickly.

The answer was given after a thoughtful pause.

"To your first question I can only answer by a conjecture. Your second, I do not think I ought to answer at all without your cousin's permission. Prevail on her to grant me an interview, and afterwards she will probably tell you all you wish to know."

"That is an irresistible bribe offered to my curiosity. I shall advocate your cause immediately, and with all my eloquence; that is, if I find Alice

awake. Walk in, and I will give you the result of my plea."

"Thank you; I will do so with pleasure, and I hope you will secure an early hour of audience for me to-morrow."

"I am glad to see you will admit visitors at this hour, Mrs. Wharton," said Mr. Gaston, as he followed with Major Wharton; "I want to know how my friend Alice is."

They entered the little parlour in which Alice had sat. The candle still burned upon the table, and there, too, lay the opened book—the ink scarcely dry upon its last page—in which Alice recorded her secret thoughts and feelings—a book on which no eye but her own had ever looked, and whose very existence was unknown to any other. This attracted Isabelle's attention immediately. Glancing at the closely written pages so hastily that she read no single line of them, there was yet something in the arrangement of the whole which marked a diary, and, closing the book, and taking it in her hand, Isabelle said, "Alice will be here directly; she would not have left this book if she had not intended to return."

Throwing off her scarf and hood, Isabelle seated herself and chatted for a few minutes with Mr. Gaston, listening every minute for the light step of

Alice, but, except an occasional movement of Rose in the next room, nothing was heard beyond the parlour. At length she rose, saying, "Alice must have retired for the night; I will see if she is asleep." Then returning, she gave the book she held to Major Wharton, and added, "Keep it till I come back; I will give Alice a little fright about it."

"What is it?" he asked.

"A diary, and she deserves to be teased a little for keeping it secret from me so long."

"Rather say, for leaving it open here so carelessly," said Major Wharton.

Isabelle left the room with a gay smile upon her face, and ran up the stairs with steps light as her heart. Scarcely a moment passed when she re-entered with a face pale and agitated, exclaiming, "Oh, Edward, Edward! what can have become of Alice?"

In an instant the gentlemen were on their feet, questioning and surmising. Rose was called, but she knew nothing; she had left Miss Alice, writing at the table in the parlour, not long after they went away. "Perhaps she had gone to one of the other cottages," Mr. Gaston suggested; and Major Wharton, requesting that the gentlemen would remain with Isabelle, hastened to inquire at the

only one to which it was possible for her to make so unseasonable a visit. He was gone but a few minutes; she was not there—had not been there. He made the announcement in a low tone, while he shunned the questioning eyes of his wife. She received it with a burst of tears. Major Wharton laid his hand gently, soothingly upon her bowed head; but he did not speak. Mr. Grahame, too, was silent; and as Mr. Gaston looked at him, he was startled by the ghastly pallor of his face, and by the stern expression of his slightly-knitted brow. It was again Mr. Gaston who spoke: "May we not be unnecessarily anxious? may not Alice have walked out?" Major Wharton glanced at the clock, and shook his head: it was nearly eleven. "But, Isabelle," he said, "call Rose again; she may know something."

Rose was called, but could tell nothing more than had been heard already, "she had left Miss Alice in the parlour, writing."

"In this book, doubtless," said Isabelle, as she looked down upon it through tearful eyes.

"Which you must examine, Isabelle, if we do not either see or hear of your cousin soon. She may even have left it open for that purpose: it may contain the secret of her absence."

The suggestion was no sooner made than it was adopted by Isabelle's sanguine nature.

"Oh! why did you not say that before?" she exclaimed, as, opening to the last page, she cast her eyes at once to the few concluding lines, beginning with, "How dare he suspect me, &c." Her cheek flushed, her eye kindled as she read; but the mystery she sought to solve found no key there. She glanced further up the page—her eye rested on a name: could it be? was it, indeed, Robert Grahame? he whom she had been accustomed to regard as of such unsullied nobility of nature? was it he who possessed such mysterious influence over the happiness of Alice?—he of whom she wrote that, "he should shrink and cower before her?" A strange suspicion was awakened, and her eyes flashed quickly from the written page to him with indignant and haughty fire in their glance. She saw, as Mr. Gaston had done, the knitted brow and pallid face, as well as the stern questioning of the eyes fixed upon her face, which seemed to her to command from her the secrets on that written page—a sealed book to all but her. Ever hasty in her decisions, and impulsive in her actions, Isabelle, as she caught that look, said to herself, "He is guilty, he has

contrived this—he dreads even now that I have discovered here the evidence of his crime; and so I have, for none can read that page, and doubt that there was some acknowledged tie between Alice and himself. She has either fled from him, poor child! or been carried off by his agents. He shall read that page, and in his emotion I will read his condemnation." Then, as her rapid thought reached this point, bent upon the one object, forgetful of all else, she said to him with a cold disdainful smile, "I think, Mr. Grahame, I must ask you to read this: you, if I mistake not, may furnish us with a clew from this labyrinth."

"Mr. Grahame!" exclaimed Major Wharton, in an accent of surprise, an emotion which Mr. Gaston's countenance expressed, in at least an equal degree; but on Robert Grahame's face there was no surprise. Isabelle eyed him with a glance, keen, searching, as if she would read his soul. She expected that he would shrink from her proffer—that she would read apprehension in his face; but, on the contrary, the stern brow relaxed, the earnest eyes grew radiant with what seemed gladness, and he made a quick step forward, with outstretched hand, to seize the proffered volume; before he had touched it, however, a change seemed to pass over

his spirit, and drawing back, he said, "That book was not meant for my perusal, Mrs. Wharton: have I a right to read it?"

"He is guilty! he is guilty!" said Isabelle to herself, "he shrinks from the trial, but he shall undergo it;" and she continued aloud, with scarce the pause of a minute, "You cannot believe, sir, that I could counsel you to do what would be either indelicate or unkind to my cousin; there is that here, I repeat, to which you only can furnish a clew; under existing circumstances, it would be both base and cruel in you to refuse to do as I request."

Her face was flushed, her eyes sparkling, her tone indignant.

"Isabelle!" cried Major Wharton, really fearing that her terror respecting Alice had deprived her of her senses. Mr. Gaston continued silent. His eyes were fastened, not on Isabelle, but on Robert Grahame, who said, "You place me in a strange position, Mrs. Wharton; I am to be judged as base and cruel by you, if I do not what I feel to be dishonourable to your cousin; I will be guided by your husband; no man is more fastidious in honour. Major Wharton, can I obey your wife's command?"—*solicitation* he could not call it.

"Certainly; if there be wrong in your reading,

the wrong is Isabelle's, not yours," was Major Wharton's reply to this appeal; and, ere it was concluded, Robert Grahame had received the volume, and stood with eye and soul intent upon the lines to which Isabelle had pointed. As he read, the cloud rose from his brow, the deadly pallor of his cheek gave way, and when he looked up again there was a light in his eyes which none had seen there for weeks past, and his mouth, whose usual expression was that of calm, immovable decision, seemed in those few minutes to have acquired the soft, mobile grace that might have marked an Epicurean's.

"I can never sufficiently thank you for suffering me to read those lines," he said to Isabelle, as he returned the volume, which she received in speechless astonishment at what seemed to her at the moment his insolent assurance. Before she could recover voice or arrange her thoughts, he had turned to Major Wharton and Mr. Gaston, saying, "Though prompted by a suspicion, which at a calmer moment she would have felt to be as unjust to her cousin as to myself, Mrs. Wharton has done me an inexpressible service in permitting me to read a single paragraph in her cousin's journal. This is no time for long explanation, I can only say now that circumstances I must not pause to detail,

occurred just before Miss Montrose left Cambridge which gave me the most painful shock I have ever endured, by leading me to doubt the childlike purity and integrity of one who had long been the object of my deepest interest and admiration."

This avowal was made without the slightest hesitation or embarrassment, perhaps from the feeling that it should not be withheld from Isabelle after the revelation which the journal had made of the feelings of Alice. Having made it, Mr. Grahame continued, "The doubt was unjust—the manner in which it was evinced, I fear, inexcusably harsh. I am never lenient, I fear, and perhaps we are all least so where we hoped most. Only this evening I received a letter from Lieutenant Donald Montrose, which inspired me with the hope that all which had seemed strange to me in Miss Montrose might be so explained as only to increase my admiration for her. I came here full of remorse to seek her forgiveness—she was gone—gone clandestinely —*she* had sent away the only one who had been left in the house and might have reported her proceedings—for an instant, the old suspicion came back, and while you only mourned for her, I, with a more deeply stricken heart, condemned her—I was wrong,—she who wrote that journal, never went willingly hence with any man—least of all,

with him whom I suspect of being the author of this outrage."

His face grew stern again, his brow black as night.

"And whom do you suspect?" asked his three listeners, in a breath.

"Browne—George Browne—it was the last card by which he might hope to retrieve his ruined fortune. Listen," he said, as they would have interrupted him to doubt the correctness of such a conclusion. "He knows by this time, doubtless, that my brother, whom he supposed to be dead, has returned—that he is at Montrose Hall." Isabelle and Major Wharton uttered ejaculations of surprise; but he proceeded rapidly, not heeding, if he heard them. "He knows that his testimony will not only compel him to disgorge his ill-gotten gain, but will bring on him the severest punishment the law can inflict, short of death. If Mr. Gaston is correct in his belief, the heirs of Charles Montrose are now rich by the recovery of claims which at his death were supposed worthless. Browne knows this without a doubt, and by forcing Alice into a marriage with him, he at once secures her fortune and places a shield between himself and the prosecution he dreaded. He knows your brother's generosity, and is aware that he would endure much injustice before he would send to a prison—"

he hesitated—he could not say, "the *husband* of Alice."

"Am I not right?" he exclaimed, suddenly appealing to the gentlemen.

"I believe you are; but your conclusions bring little comfort," said Major Wharton, sadly. "What shall we do? Whither turn to meet this blow in the dark!"

"I think he will try to get out of the country. He will aim, therefore, for a seaport, probably for New York or Boston. I will follow him in that direction with all the speed possible—"

"And I will accompany you," said Major Wharton. "Be comforted, my dear Isabelle, I have little doubt we shall overtake them."

"We will—we will!" said Robert Grahame. "Heaven is with us! But we are losing time. How soon can you be ready?"

"I am ready now," Major Wharton replied; "but should we not send an express to her brother? He is at Washington."

"Talk with Mr. Gaston of that while I make the arrangements for our pursuit. We must make it as rapidly as possible. Can you tell me where I may procure the fleetest horses?"

"Take mine," said Mr. Gaston. "You thought they travelled well on the way here."

"I did; but I should think such travelling but creeping now."

"Dinsmore has a famous pair of trotters, but he would not sell them, I fear; besides we ought to be many miles on our way before we can see him in the morning."

"Do you know him?" asked Robert Grahame.

"Well enough to know that he values a fine horse beyond most men,—not well enough to intrude on him at this time of night," said Major Wharton.

"Come with me; I may need a sponsor. I will bear all the consequences of intrusion."

Major Wharton lifted his hat from the table, but said at the same time, "It is useless to go; I do not believe anything will induce Dinsmore to part with those horses; I scarcely *like* to propose it to him."

"A true Southerner," thought Mr. Gaston, who was a silent but not uninterested listener. "He would rather charge at the head of a forlorn hope than do anything not exactly *selon les règles*."

The discipline of life had left Robert Grahame little of this sensitiveness to opinion,—the "*que dira-t-on*" affected him but slightly.

"Give me a note of introduction to Mr. Dinsmore," he said, "and I will make the proposal."

"But he will be in bed, asleep."

"Then I must wake him; you have no objection to give me the note?"

The last words were spoken with a somewhat impatient accent.

"Not the least," was the answer, as seating himself at the table Major Wharton wrote a few hurried lines, introducing Mr. Grahame as his friend.

At the hotel where Mr. Dinsmore lodged, Robert Grahame found a sleepy landlord and sulky waiters; but winning his way with gold where he could, and conquering it by determination where he could not, he at length found himself face to face with Mr. Dinsmore, in a room adjoining his chamber. It is no pleasant thing to be aroused out of one's first sleep to meet a stranger of whose very name you were ignorant but an hour before, and most persons will sympathize with the discontent of Mr. Dinsmore as he stood wrapped in his dressing-gown to listen to a stranger's proposition to purchase his favourite horses. This discontent was manifest in his lowering brow, and a fretful expression about the mouth, as well as in the curt tone with which he replied to the question whether he would part with them, "No, sir, not for a thousand dollars a-piece."

"If the horses are really what I have been told in point of speed, sir, money would be no object to me in their purchase to-night. Name your own price."

"Five thousand dollars a-piece, sir," said Mr. Dinsmore, half turning away with a grim smile, as if the matter was settled and the interview terminated.

"You shall have it, sir; I have not, of course, that amount of money with me, but I will give you a check on the bank of New York, or—"

"The check will be perfectly satisfactory, sir," said Mr. Dinsmore, glancing again over Major Wharton's note, as if to strengthen his conviction that he was not dealing with a clever knave, "but the horses cost me but three thousand dollars, and I shall be perfectly satisfied with half the sum I named."

Mr. Dinsmore was a gentleman, though a little ill-tempered.

In little more than half an hour, while Mr. Dinsmore was again sinking into slumber, not quite dissatisfied with the results to himself of the interview he had granted so recently, Robert Grahame was at the door of Major Wharton's cottage in a light carriage, from which the top had been taken to render it yet lighter, drawn by Mr. Dinsmore's

famous trotters, and attended by a groom, riding one of Mr. Gaston's horses and leading the other, also saddled.

Major Wharton was ready. Isabelle attended him to the carriage, and holding out her hand to Robert Grahame, said, "You will forgive me more readily than I shall forgive myself, Mr. Grahame, for suspicions which my past knowledge of you should have rendered impossible."

"You have been less harsh, less unjust than I," said Robert Grahame, with a cordial pressure of the little hand offered in pledge of amity.

"You will bring Alice back to me,—I know you will."

And with these words of good omen sounding in their ears they set off, and were quickly out of sight, their horses moving as if they knew that weal or wo waited on their speed.

CHAPTER VI.

"Alack! when once our grace we have forgot,
Nothing goes right."

"The fire of rage is in him; and 'twere good
You leaned unto his sentence, with what patience
Your wisdom may inform you."

"Fill the bumper fair!
Every drop we sprinkle,
O'er the brow of Care,
Smooths away a wrinkle."

THUS sang William Clarke as he sat at the head of a table covered with the luxuries of forest, field, and river, and glowing and sparkling with the rich wines of Germany and France. Around that table were gathered six or eight men as young as himself, and one or two on whose faces deeper lines marked more advanced age and the longer continuance of dissipation.

William was a leader now in Bacchanalian revels as he had been in the frank, joyous life of his country home; but how different a life it was! Pleasure, it is true, was the pursuit in both; but in the one it was a pleasure in harmony at least

with the physical man. The fresh, free air, the rapid ride, the glory of the early morning, the adventurous spirit with which the young hunter penetrated the mystery of pathless woods, following wherever the quarry led. Contrast the influences of these with those of the closed room, the gas-lights, the luxurious supper, the intoxicating draught. Health, energy, and courage wait on the first; languor of body, feebleness of mind, a brief season of mad jollity, succeeded by a despondency which is as the "shadow of death"—these are the fruits of the last. And already this different life began to tell upon William's appearance; his cheek was of a more delicate hue, his eye less frank and bold, his voice seemed less hearty.

Perhaps there is nothing in which men differ more than in the effect produced on them by sorrow. Like everything received from God's hand, we make of this a blessing or a curse, by the mode in which we receive it. Poets and romancers, and sometimes grave philosophers, talk of the purifying influence of sorrow; but the teaching of life, of reason, and of Scripture, is that it is only when we kiss the rod that chastens, when sorrow drives us, like trembling children to a father's bosom, that it becomes a purifier. This it had not been to William Clarke. His disappointment in relation

to Isabelle had made him both gloomy and irascible. He received it not as the discipline of heavenly love, but as the infliction of human cruelty. He could not remain in the neighbourhood of her he had lost, where everything was associated with his past hopes, and added to his present regrets. His mother understood his feelings almost without a word, and by her influence his father consented to his travelling for the summer, though he could not refrain from the expression of his regret, that "William should be such a cowardly milksop as to be driven from his home by the fear of meeting a girl who did not happen to fancy him."

Mrs. Clarke was not a very far-seeing person; but a few hints from Allan quickened her observation so far, that she became uneasy at the thought of sending William away from the restraints of home without some calmer mind to influence his. This uneasiness made her suggest that Allan should accompany him—a suggestion so pleasing to the brothers that the indulgent father could not refuse his assent to it. And thus these youths of twenty-two and seventeen were sent forth into the world without any controlling influence, except such as they might find within themselves. Who shall paint the delight of Allan when his pilgrimage

began? One must be able to recall his own youth, and that youth must have been ardent, imaginative, full of a dreamy romance in thought and feeling, secluded in position and uneventful in action, to enable him to understand it. It was to him in anticipation a *pilgrimage* indeed, in search of—he knew not what exactly—but something which was needed to complete his life. Somewhere in his course he would doubtless find his ideal of beauty and of nobleness—somewhere he would find an interpreter for the vague longings of his soul—some clew he would discover by which he might guide his steps in this labyrinth of life, where hitherto walking on and on, he still ever returned to the same point.

That disappointment awaited Allan we need scarcely say. William was no dreamer in search of an ideal; he was a youth of little imagination, but of warm affections, keen senses, and strong passions. He sought pleasure as the plant seeks light; it was to him the essential principle of life. That which he most earnestly desired, that which he believed would have made his life one scene of joy, had been denied him, and he must supply its place with what he could. The scenes in which Allan would have delighted could do nothing for him. The spray of Niagara could not wash the past from his soul; on the green banks of the

Hudson, or amid the lakes and mountains of New Hampshire, he should still see the form and hear the voice that haunted his life—the ghost of buried joy. In crowds only was it unseen, unheard; and so he hurried from one scene of wild, noisy, yet heartless merriment to another. And Allan, sick of all around him, sad at heart for himself, sadder for William, sat at his feasts, longing even for the whispering of his native pine-forests, in lieu of this "laughter of fools" and mirth of madmen.

Among these jovial spirits—these good fellows—as they called themselves, Allan was no favourite; and perhaps it was a relief to all when, on this particular night, as the uproar grew louder, and the toasts more frequent, and the jests coarser, Allan withdrew, shaking off by one determined effort the grasp of the half-inebriated William. But though withdrawing from the room, Allan was irresistibly tempted to remain in its neighbourhood. William might need him; for the transition from joviality to quarrelsomeness was not uncommon, as he well knew. Restlessly he walked the hall on which the supper room opened. The room had been chosen because, being in a wing of the house, it did not open on a very public street—the hall communicated with a private entrance.

For half an hour, perhaps, Allan had continued

his anxious promenade, and the clock from a neighbouring steeple was chiming twelve, when, as he approached that extremity of the hall which led by a staircase to the entrance we have named, his attention was attracted to a gentleman and lady who ascended the stairs very rapidly, and, as it seemed to him, on the part of the lady unwillingly. This unwillingness, if unwillingness it were, was manifested rather by her hanging as a dead weight upon the arm of her companion than by any more active resistance. Action, indeed, on her part, was scarcely possible, as Allan perceived, on their nearer approach, the gentleman holding both her hands clasped over his arm. These observations were made while they were comparatively in shadow, but as they ascended, the gas-light illuminating the hall flashed upon them, and Allan lost all other thought in the one feeling of illimitable surprise at seeing who the lady was.

"Alice Montrose!" he exclaimed.

The exclamation drew the lady's eyes upon him, and from her white lips issued a feeble, plaintive cry of "Allan! Allan, save me!" as she was hurried by him.

Instinctively, Allan followed with swift steps their retreating forms; they were but a second before him, but in such a race, a second is much.

They paused at a door—"I have them now," thought Allan; but ere the thought could have been spoken, the door flew open as by magic, for no key had been applied, and pushing the lady before him, the gentleman entered. Allan was close upon their heels, and when George Browne, for he, of course, it was, would have closed the door, he was already on its threshold. Stripling as he was, he could not long resist the mature strength exerted against him; he was pushed from the doorway, but seizing the inner handle of the door in his grasp, though unable to enter himself, the interposition of his arm still prevented Browne from securing the lock. During this struggle, not a word had been uttered on either side. It had occurred, as we have already said, in a part of the house remote from the street, and the occupants of the neighbouring rooms were for the most part, doubtless, asleep; at least, no step or voice told that a listener was near. Yet, the frantic eagerness of Browne to put the protection of a lock between him and the rest of the house, showed that he thought himself in more immediate danger than the presence of a boy like Allan would have seemed to threaten. Maddened by rage and terror, as he found it impossible to remove the arm of Allan, he now pressed the door against it with his

whole force, crushing the bone with seemingly as little pity or remorse as he would have broken a piece of wood. Alice had stood during the preceding struggle, voiceless, breathless, in all the agitation of mingled hope and fear; but now, she forgot herself in her terror for Allan, and cried, while she vainly strove with her slight force to pull back the door, "Oh, help! help! He will kill him! He will kill him!"

Help was nigh, nigher than she thought, though, probably, not nigher than Browne anticipated. Ere her cry had ceased, it was answered by, "Stand back!" uttered in a stern, imperative tone.

Alice knew the voice well, even in that moment of fear. Instinctively she obeyed the command and sprang aside, just as the door was dashed open with a force that sent George Browne reeling to the other side of the room. Scarcely observing Allan, who leaned pale and faint against the wall, unable to repress his groans as he supported his bruised and crushed arm with the other hand, Robert Grahame entered the room and advanced at once to Browne, who stood with one hand in his bosom, and his eyes, in which all the life in his face seemed concentrated, fixed upon him as he approached.

Like the stag driven to his last retreat, he stood there at bay, and there was that in his attitude and face which might well have made a prudent man hesitate to come near him; but there was no fear in the excitement which flushed the brow of Robert Grahame, and gave to his eyes an almost fierce expression.

"I warn you that I am armed; you approach me at your peril," said Browne, in a voice trembling as much with rage as fear.

"And I warn you that those are following me who will give you no chance of escape. Delay a moment and you are lost. Even now, Major Wharton's step is on the stair, and your only hope of safety from the doom your crimes deserve is in regaining the carriage which still waits where you left it. Fool! would you add murder to your sins?" cried Grahame, as, seizing the arm of Browne, he forced it up, and with his other hand wrenched from his grasp a pistol, which his quick eye had detected ere the but half-resolved villain had quite withdrawn it from his bosom. The movement had been so rapid, that neither Alice nor Allan saw the weapon till it was in his hand. At the moment he secured it, steps and voices were heard.

"Go, go," cried Robert Grahame, "for the sake

of those on whom the shadow of your disgrace must fall; I bid you go."

George Browne felt that his last card was played out. He approached the door, but he was too late: already, the hall through which he must pass on his way to the stairs was darkened by the shadows of his pursuers. He rushed back to a window whose sash was raised, and threw himself from it, as Major Wharton presented himself at the open door.

Weary with travel, exhausted by want of sleep and food, and faint with the rush of conflicting emotions, Alice had sunk upon a couch at the entrance of Robert Grahame, and watched his every movement with a bewildering doubt of the reality of what she saw and heard. "It is a dream, it is a dream!" she repeated unconsciously, as her heavy eyes turned ever towards him, seeing him, him only, in all the room. But when she heard the familiar "Alice!" of Major Wharton, and turning toward the point whence the sound came, she saw the face associated for so many weeks with her home life, looking upon her with even more than its accustomed kindness, she was startled into more vivid consciousness, and uttering a glad, yet feeble cry, she rose to approach him. He saw her tottering step, the sinking of her form,

and sprang to her side just in time to catch her ere she fell. Alice had not fainted. As he laid her on a sofa, she murmured, "Water!"

A butler's tray stood on a side table, with refreshments, and scarcely had that low murmur passed her lips before a glass of wine and water was presented to them by Major Wharton, who had received it from Robert Grahame. She drank eagerly and said, "I am better," though she still seemed too feeble to raise her heavy eyelids.

A jelly was placed in Major Wharton's hand, and Robert Grahame whispered, "She needs refreshment. I will see if I can find a chambermaid who will attend her to her room. Do not let her talk —to-morrow will be time enough to ask questions."

Major Wharton assented. On applying to the *maître d'hôtel*, Robert Grahame learned that a woman was in waiting, by Mr. Browne's particular request, to attend on the lady who was expected to accompany him that night to the hotel. He also learned that a suite of apartments, consisting of the parlour in which Alice now lay, and of two bedrooms communicating with it, had been engaged by Mr. Browne a week before, and that a messenger had arrived to-night, some hours before him, with orders that the rooms should be made ready and refreshments placed in the parlour, as he would

probably arrive at too late an hour to obtain them, if they were not already provided. Having sent the chambermaid to Alice, Robert Grahame said to the landlord, that *Mr. Browne having been forced* to continue his journey, Major Wharton and himself would be answerable for the rooms. This was said with the hope of preventing any gossip on a subject in which Alice was so deeply involved. The landlord's reply indicated that he at least *suspected the force* to be something more than a figure of speech.

"Was the young gentleman hurt much, sir?" he asked.

"What young gentleman?" inquired Robert Grahame.

"Mr. Allan Clarke. I heard something about his having a scuffle with Mr. Browne—at any rate, I know he sent for a surgeon who has not left him yet."

It was Robert Grahame's first remembrance of the gallant young man whose heroic determination had prevented Browne's securing himself in his room, and thus rendering his discovery doubtful, and his expulsion, if discovered, more difficult. Reproaching himself for a neglect which he now called ungrateful, Robert Grahame requested the landlord to take his card to Mr. Clarke's room, and

ask if he would see him. He himself followed to the door of the room, into which he was, with little delay, admitted.

Robert Grahame looked with equal surprise and admiration upon the boyish form and face which lay there evidently suffering great pain still, though somewhat relieved by the soothing applications which the surgeon was making from time to time to his swollen and discoloured arm. With a few words of animated praise from himself, and earnest thanks in the name of the friends of Miss Montrose, Robert Grahame requested to know if he could do anything for him.

"Yes, sir," was the reply; "you will greatly oblige me if you will ask Major Wharton to see me as soon as he can leave Miss Montrose."

Ascertaining that this was all he could do for his young ally, and obtaining his permission to see him again in the morning, Robert Grahame immediately sought Major Wharton, and delivered his message. It occasioned Major Wharton much surprise, as he had not seen Allan, who, feeling that his pain was becoming intolerable, had retreated from the room at the moment of his entrance. Alice had already withdrawn, and Major Wharton sought Allan, without a moment's delay. Perhaps nothing in medicine could have so soothed the pain

of Allan as the warm enthusiastic praise which Major Wharton, a man himself noted for courage, bestowed on what he did not hesitate to call, his heroism. The kindness of the Major's manner made it easy for Allan to confide to him his anxiety respecting William, in which he found ready sympathy and aid. William was still in the supper-room, as gay as when Allan left him, and somewhat more noisy, when Major Wharton sought him by his brother's request. He was evidently little pleased at first by his presence; but the knowledge that Allan had been hurt, did much to sober him, and the high appreciation of his brother's noble qualities which Major Wharton expressed, inspired him, for the time at least, with more friendly feelings towards him, under whose influence he was readily induced to retire to his room, and thus to relieve Allan's mind from apprehension for the present.

The habits of a soldier had made Major Wharton a light sleeper, and notwithstanding the fatigue of the last day and night, and the late hour at which he retired to his room, he rose before the sun on the following morning. He hoped that Alice was still sleeping, and would not disturb her even by an inquiry, but as soon as he was dressed he found his way to Allan's room. The door was not locked,

and opening it cautiously, he entered. Allan was lying very quietly, though not asleep. He was looking into the face of his brother, who sat beside him, with his hand clasped in his. William's back was to the door, and as it opened, Major Wharton heard him say, "As soon as we can hear from home and have money to pay our bills here, I will go where you please, Allan."

"How are you, Allan?" cried Major Wharton, and William turned quickly with an angry sparkle in his eye. He was mortified at the remembrance of the scene in which Major Wharton had found him the last evening, and yet more, perhaps, at what he feared might have been overheard by him this morning.

It was impossible, however, to reject the Major's frankly proffered hand, nor could William rudely withdraw his from the clasp in which Major Wharton still held it, as seating himself beside the bed, he laid his other hand on Allan's, and said, "How can I ever repay my obligations to you two?"

"You owe me nothing, sir," said William, not without a little haughtinoss in his manner.

Major Wharton looked on him with a grave yet kindly expression. For a moment William met that look coldly, but only for a moment; then his

eyes softened, and he turned them quickly away, as if unwilling that the feeling in them should be read. Major Wharton turned with a smile to Allan.

"At least," he said, "you will not deny my obligations to Allan, who has endured pain, from which many a stout soldier would have shrunk, for the rescue of one whom I love as a sister. If Alice will consent. I will not only stay here, and nurse you myself, Allan, but I will send for Isabelle to nurse you too."

"That will be very kind," said Allan, as he gently pressed the hand which held his; yet, even as he did so, he glanced doubtfully at William, who, if he saw the glance, did not respond to it.

"You must both feel some curiosity, at least, to know how Alice came into the position in which you saw her last night," said Major Wharton.

Allan assented, and the Major old all he knew and all he conjectured of the disappearance of Alice; the alarm of her friends; the suggestion of Mr. Grahame, and his activity in the pursuit.

"At Fredericksburgh," he said, we became certain that we were on the right track, and we hoped to overtake them before they reached Baltimore. When we were about ten miles from this city, we found it impossible to endure the slower

pace of our weary carriage-horses, and we exchanged the carriage for the led horses and the saddle. We soon found that Mr. Grahame's horse was the fleetest, and agreed that he should press on and I would follow as fast as I could. I have since heard from him that he saw a carriage soon after entering the city, which he suspected to be the one we were in search of. He followed accordingly, keeping it in view till quite near this hotel, when, at a turning in the street, he lost it, and it was some minutes before he discovered the very private entrance of the hotel, at which it had stopped. Those minutes had given the villain Browne, who had doubtless seen him, the time he needed, and, but for your gallantry, Allan, we should have been unable to secure our object, except by the aid of the law,—a process which would have involved delay and a publicity, which, for the sake of Alice, we were most anxious to avoid."

"You say the name of this scoundrel, to whom Allan owes his suffering, is Browne. Can you tell me where I shall be most likely to find him?" asked William Clarke, while the flush on his brow told plainly enough the object of his inquiry.

"I cannot—but I think he will leave the country as soon as possible, for he knows there is danger in

As he concluded, seeking no answer, not even by a look, he turned away.

In the parlour adjoining his own apartment, Major Wharton found Robert Grahame awaiting him. He had come to say that he would return that day to the Springs, and give Mrs. Wharton intelligence of her cousin's safety.

"Going to the Springs!" cried Major Wharton, and, remembering the confession he had heard so lately from Robert Grahame, he would, probably, had he been speaking to a younger man, have added, "and without seeing Alice?" It is not easy, however, for any one to break through the reserves within which a man—at least a man like Robert Grahame—may have fenced his spirit, and Major Wharton contented himself with the exclamation we have recorded.

Again, a younger man, or one more given to confidence than Robert Grahame, would probably have answered, "I have so offended against this pure and gentle girl that I dare not see her without her permission. To stay here now, or to make the journey to the Springs with you, would be to force her to endure my presence; therefore I go alone, where she may be, on this subject, mistress of herself;" but Robert Grahame said nothing of all this; he only answered to Major Wharton's exclamation, "Yes."

Both gentlemen were silent for a few minutes; both seemed in earnest thought, and both looked up at the same moment to speak.

"Have you any special communication for Mrs. Wharton?" asked Robert Grahame; "or do you follow me so soon as to make this needless?"

"I have almost concluded not to return to the Springs at all; that is, with Alice's permission, I have thought of remaining here, at least, until Allan Clarke was better, and of sending for Isabelle to join us. There is but one difficulty—I can neither leave Alice, nor permit Isabelle to travel alone."

"Would you permit me to escort her?" asked Robert Grahame, with animation.

"Most gratefully! Such an arrangement would decide me at once."

"So let it be, then. I will order the carriage and be ready to set out in half an hour. Can you say what you wish to Mrs. Wharton in that time?"

"Oh yes! I will be ready for you," said Major Wharton, as he drew his chair to the table on which lay pen, ink, and paper.

Robert Grahame had left the room, and Major Wharton had already begun to write, when, suddenly returning, he said, "We have forgotten; this arrangement may not be agreeable to Miss Montrose. Have you heard from her this morning?"

"No, but I will ring for the chambermaid, whom I directed to sleep on a sofa in her room last night, and learn from her how she passed the night. I do not like to disturb her so early by any inquiries."

The chambermaid appeared—reported that the lady was sleeping when she left the room, and was dismissed.

"I do not think we need fear any objection from Alice," said Major Wharton, when she was gone; "indeed, I think, on her own account, this is a desirable arrangement; she needs rest."

"But, coming as she did, may she not need other things not so easily found here?"

"Isabelle took care of that, and sent by me what she thought of prime necessity to her. You can forward her baggage immediately on your arrival, and she will receive it in three or four days."

"I hope to be here myself in four days, if that be not too rapid travelling for Mrs. Wharton. Pray present my respects to Miss Montrose, and say"—he paused for longer meditation than such a message might seem to require—then, as he awoke to the perception of Major Wharton's suspended pen and half-smiling eye, added—"say that I hope she will permit me to see her on my return."

CHAPTER VII.

"She speaks,
Yet she says nothing."

"This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,
May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet."

It may be remembered by the reader that Donald Montrose had despatched a letter to Robert Grahame, immediately on the discovery that Richard Grahame was alive and under his own roof. This letter was addressed to Springfield, where it lay unclaimed until the long delay in receiving an answer induced Donald to forward another letter, written about ten days later, to the care of Mr. Gaston. This last, arriving after Robert Grahame and Mr. Gaston had left Boston, was received by Mary, who had been empowered by her brother to open his letters in his absence, that only such as were of immediate moment should be forwarded to him. As there was an allusion, in the second letter, to that which had been sent by the way of Springfield, Mary wrote to the post-master at that place, obtained the letter, and forwarded both together to her brother. The contents of the first of these letters are already known to the reader; the

[illegible] the impression that the health [illegible] Graham had been suc[illegible] a low nervous fever, which his physician [illegible] to the result chiefly of mental anxiety. [illegible] the illness [illegible] could do little for [illegible] case. The first advice to be given was, that [illegible] should as far as possible yield to his [illegible] wishes—the success of which at present seemed to be that he might be able, by his testimony, to relieve the family from which he was receiving such kind hospitality, from the consequences of Browne's villany. In the quiet and the kindness now surrounding him, he was already showing symptoms of healthier mental action. He had given a full and frank deposition of the circumstances connected with Donald's debt to himself, though these circumstances tended so greatly to criminate him. Acting under the advice of Mr. Sydenham, and desirous, for the sake of his aunt and cousins, to save George Browne from public exposure if possible, Donald had transmitted a copy of this deposition to the elder Mr. Browne, who had replied, as he thought, somewhat evasively, declaring, however, his willingness to do whatever was right in the business, but insisting on an interview with Mr. Richard Grahame and Lieutenant Montrose. In consequence of this, Donald had deter-

mined, as soon as Grahame could travel, to go with him to Boston, an arrangement to which the invalid had consented, though with evident reluctance, stipulating only that the journey should not be made by sea. Donald therefore wrote that, as Dr. J—— thought gentle travelling would be useful to his patient, should he continue to improve they would set out in a very few days to travel by easy stages to Boston.

"By the request of your brother," Donald continued, "this design is to be a secret to all but your sister and yourself, to whom it was necessary to make it known, to prevent your coming here to see him. He will not even consent to my making my sister an exception to this secrecy, and, as the Doctor insists on my yielding implicitly to his wishes, neither my mother nor I have said anything of him in our letters. His objection can hardly arise from the vulgar notion that a woman cannot keep a secret, for he says that my cousin Alice was the only one in Boston to whom he made known his return; binding her to secrecy, on peril of his refusal to give his testimony at all, unless he could give it in his own way, and at his own time; and he acknowledges that she was nobly faithful to her promise, under circumstances of great trial. What those circumstances were, he seems unwilling

to disclose to me; but I have insisted that she shall be at once absolved from her promise, and he has consented that she shall be permitted to communicate with you on the subject, which, with a certain oracular mystery, he assures me will be all that is needed for her repose. This permission he earnestly entreats me to give through you, dreading, he says, that many letters should be written on this subject. I must therefore trouble you to communicate with my cousin. It is a painful thought to me, that her happiness should, even temporarily, have been sacrificed to mine. Say so to her for me; and add that now her wishes must be her only limit. Here, and here only, I cannot submit to your brother's will. That she has suffered, and suffered with such uncomplaining sweetness, for my supposed advantage, can scarcely increase the warm affection with which I regard her; she will always be to me a dear sister."

This letter had found its way to Boston by the slow coaches which at that time conveyed the mails; from Boston it had been forwarded to Virginia by the same means, and thus it had been more than three weeks in reaching the hands for which it was intended. In a few days, therefore, Donald Montrose and Richard Grahame might be expected in Boston. Robert Grahame felt that they might reasonably

enough anticipate that he would meet them there. He delayed only for an interview with Alice; he had hoped to secure this interview on the evening of Ole Bull's concert; how this hope had been frustrated, and the events which had still delayed its fulfilment, the reader already knows. Travelling towards that fulfilment, it may well be believed that he made no unnecessary delay in returning to the Springs for Isabelle, and escorting her to Baltimore. He found Charles Montrose at the Springs. By the prudent arrangements of Mr. Gaston, he had been brought there without suffering any alarm for his sister—a wise precaution, as was proved by his excitement at learning the infamous attempt of Browne, even though he knew that attempt to have been unsuccessful. It was long ere Isabelle could win from him a promise, that he would leave the baffled villain to Him who hath said, "Vengeance is mine." He was almost as impatient as Robert Grahame himself to reach Baltimore. Robert Grahame arrived at the Springs late at night; the next day at mid-day the whole party were on the road; and when Isabelle, late on the succeeding evening, acknowledged that she was unable to go farther without rest, though but twenty miles from Baltimore, Charles pushed on, leaving his companions to follow in the morning.

Late as it was when he arrived at Baltimore, neither Alice nor Major Wharton had retired. They were still hoping to see Isabelle, they said; if Alice had other hopes she did not mention them; she was one in whose heart hope found an ever ready home, and it may be that the respectful message conveyed to her through Major Wharton had given entrance to the welcome guest.

Certainly, there was a light in her eyes the next morning which had not been seen there for many long weeks, as she stood before the bureau in her room examining the two muslin morning dresses which Isabelle had sent her, and hesitating whether she would wear the pink or the blue. "Charles likes to see me look well," she said to herself, with a little pardonable effort at self-deception, which her heightened colour showed to be but half successful.

The pink was chosen, and we think when it had been donned, no one would have wished it changed. Alice was not vain; indeed, few had more of that sweetest of all graces, humility. Yet a smile certainly played around her mouth as she took a parting glance at her reflection in the mirror, and remembered that Robert Grahame had once told her, "Beauty has its uses."

With something of this glow and smile still

lingering about her, she sat, a few minutes after, in the parlour, writing to her mother, when the door into the hall opened, and looking up with the expectation of greeting Charles, she saw, not Isabelle, though Isabelle stood before her, but Robert Grahame, standing on the threshold, and read in his eyes all, and more than all she had hoped. He, too, as he saw her eyes fall before his, and marked the richer colour that stole into her cheek, and even rose to the pale, pure brow, felt his heart bound with the thought, that "pride was quelled and love was free;" that his pardon had been pronounced even before it had been asked.

Isabelle, absorbed in her own glad emotions, had been quite blind to this little pantomime, and scarcely remembered that Alice had not advanced to meet her, as she folded her in her arms, and with moist eyes and trembling lips, blessed Heaven for preserving her.

"But, Alice, you have not welcomed Mr. Grahame, and let me tell you he deserves you should, for had it not been for him, my poor Alice," again passing her arm around the waist from which she had withdrawn it for a moment, that Alice might give her hand to Robert Grahame, "had it not been for him, we should not have met so soon again."

A welcome had been given and received, more than a welcome, yet no word had been spoken. Robert Grahame had extended his hand, Alice had placed hers in it; he had held it for a moment in a firm, but gentle clasp; that was all which Isabelle saw; the angels, perchance, saw more. He had not even looked in her eyes as he had done that first evening at Cambridge, when, according to her journal, she began to understand herself. Isabelle thought it a very common shaking of hands, and could she have known the thoughts of those two hearts, she might have wondered why just then one was whispering, "My own! my own! to be guarded and guided evermore through life, even unto life's end; and still, with God's help, heavenward;" and the other was uttering, "No more my own, but thine; to be held ever more in that firm, yet gentle hand."

Isabelle had quick sympathies, but she knew too little of the past to understand the present, and the silence, which was the most impressive language to those two, seemed awkward to her, and she resumed, after waiting a moment in vain for Alice to speak the thanks she considered so richly due to Mr. Grahame: "You have no idea of what feats he performed in your service; he penetrated to the very bedroom of that stiff, punctilious Mr.

Dinsmore, whom Edward himself did not like to attack, and came off with his most precious possession, a pair of incredibly-fast trotting horses: how many thousands he paid for them I do not know; but I heard Mr. Dinsmore myself say, that he believed he would have given ten thousand if it had been asked."

The silence was still unbroken. Robert Grahame made no disclaimer; at that moment there was a deeper feeling in his heart than that so common to every generous man—nay, to every gentleman—which leads him to make light of a service performed; a feeling which made him delight to have Alice, to have the world know, that fortune was nothing—life nothing—when she was to be served. Alice raised her eyes, and endeavoured to command voice to thank him, but the smiling eyes that met hers seemed to say, "Do not thank me; if it were for you, was it not also for myself?" and her effort failed.

Major Wharton's voice, exclaiming at this moment, "Why, Bella! Here already!" was certainly a relief to Isabelle, perhaps even a relief to Robert Grahame and Alice; for man can endure but for a little while feeling to which he can give no utterance.

This day at Baltimore was a pleasant day, and

one long to be remembered by some of the party there assembled, and yet there was little which would have seemed worthy of note to one who should have looked at it only in its outer aspects—little that could have been recorded in the history of a day—much that was important in the history of a heart. Major Wharton had succeeded in drawing William and Allan Clarke into their circle, and the unembarrassed friendliness of Isabelle's manner soon placed William more at his ease than he had supposed it possible he could ever be again with her. He even found himself addressing her with the old familiar Bella, before they parted. At first he hesitated, and would have corrected it with an apology—but Isabelle laughed at his hesitation, and said, "And why not Bella? Does it seem too familiar for a major's lady? You are one of the few friends," she added in a graver tone, "from whom I should not like anything else."

Was Isabelle really as unconscious of his past feelings as this implied, or was this the dictate of womanly tact to appear so? It was a question which even her husband could not have answered.

Allan carried his arm in a sling, but insisted that it was quite well, and that the sling was a tyrannical enactment of the surgeon, aided and abetted by William.

"I want to interest you in young Clarke," said Major Wharton to Robert Grahame, as they were walking together in the afternoon of this day.

"I am interested in him; his gallant conduct the evening we arrived here accomplished that."

"You mean Allan. Yes, he is a noble being; but I spoke of my friend, William."

"I acknowledge he does not please me so much; perhaps I should rather say *did* not; for the slight reserve of which I have been conscious toward him, had its origin on that same evening."

"Yes, yes, I know; but—I should be sorry to seem to offer an apology for such forgetfulness of all the nobler purposes of life as the abandonment to such pleasures—if pleasures indeed they may be called—evinces; but while I will join you in condemning the habits without a single reservation, there are some things which plead for mercy to the individual."

"May I ask what those things are?"

"First, his nature, and then, his education."

"The first is a plea which we may all present; is it not?"

"No; at least, not in the sense I mean. These children of the sun—you smile—do you not believe that man is influenced in some degree by the climate in which he draws his breath?"

"*In some degree*; yes, in his physical organization, much—but in his spirit. I have been accustomed to regard man as the master, not the slave of nature."

"And so he should be; yet it is easier to assert that mastership over the stern and rugged nature which has, as it were, dared you to contest every hour of your life, than over that which, like a soft Delilah, soothes you to sleep, and binds you in a chain of flowers. Believe me, it would take a nice physiologist to say how far you may touch the physical organization of man, and leave his spirit free."

"I believe you, and—my smile notwithstanding—I agree with you so far: but the plea which you present in a philosophical sense has been, I fear, brought into some contempt by the use sometimes made of it by those who seemed to think that it not only excused but dignified the most contemptible follies and the wildest lawlessness."

"To this I can only answer, that no climate has a monopoly of fools: but to return to William Clarke and to his Southern nature. Is it too much to claim for that nature peculiar keenness of sensation; a quick springing of the soul to pleasure, and shrinking from the slightest touch of pain, such as a tropical plant might have from the cold blasts of

Northern winter? Now, admitting this peculiar keenness of susceptibility—"

"I should admit it more readily if you said *quickness*. I believe the joy or sorrow is not less deep elsewhere, though it may work itself into the soul by a slower process."

"It may be so; I will not dispute it. Say, then, this *quickness* of susceptibility. You will see that while it may be directed to noble purposes, undisciplined it will impel the possessor in the most wayward and erratic courses; and poor William's education has been just such as his Southern skies, and woods, and fields have made for him. He has lived with nature, but it was a nature whose every precept was 'enjoy,'—to seize pleasure, to escape from suffering; these, you see, were the strongest impulses of his nature, and the most emphatic lessons of his education."

"And had he never heard of any nobler pleasure than to eat, drink, and be merry?"

"Of the noblest pleasures I fear William has thought little yet, though he has doubtless heard much. The earth has been so beautiful to him, that he has never looked above it; but though his pleasures may not have been of the highest order, they were at least harmless and natural, till a great disappointment poisoned them, and then, impatient

of sorrow, he turned to these grosser and more pungent excitements."

"What the young man wants is work," said Robert Grahame,—"work which shall command his mental and his physical energies. What he wants is, to win his bread by the sweat of his brow."

"Ah! there it is; and that is the very thing in which the South is wanting—work for her children."

"The South wanting in work! It seems to me that she has the greatest and the noblest work to perform ever committed to any land."

"I understand you, and I agree with you; but my friend William feels neither the responsibility nor the nobility of that work yet; it is too late in life for him to begin the study of a profession,—too late for him to enter the army or navy. Now I feel the importance of your Northern habit of giving to every young man a profession—an occupation of some sort—and making him work at it. How invaluable to William would be such a resource now, when it is too late to create it!"

"Travelling is, I think, the best resource for the diversion of idlers. What say you to that for him? I can give him letters that may be valuable."

"In his present mood, the temptations he might encounter in travelling would be dangerous; be-

sides, I wanted something which would open an honourable career to him."

"What say you to his going abroad, as private Secretary to our Minister at the Court of ——."

Major Wharton mused for a moment. "Not quite the thing, yet the best you have named; I will talk to him about it."

And Major Wharton sought William immediately, feeling that it would be advantageous to him even to present some new and interesting subject of thought. He found William in earnest conversation with a stranger, who was speaking in the most animated manner of the glories of the far West—of its wide prairies and noble rivers—of its rich rewards for labour, and the glorious sport on its hunting-grounds—above all, of its free life, unshackled by forms, and full of adventure. This man, still young—as young as William Clarke—could tell of days of lonely riding over prairie and through forest, communing with the "full, free heart of nature"—of nights in which he had slept on the ground, with the sky for his canopy and his horse for his only companion. William had shot deer; but he could tell of having stood face to face with a fierce panther, and having saved his life by his quick eye and his steady nerve. William listened with the intensest interest, and exclaimed, in tones

that came from the heart, "How I should like to go there!"

"Well, come along!" cried the social and communicative stranger; "I was going to-morrow, but I'll wait till next day for you."

Major Wharton read aright the change in William's face, as he saw the light fading from his eyes; and before he could decline, he added, "I wish you would go, William. I have been wanting to employ an agent to look after some lands in Iowa that belong to me, and if you will go, I will pay your expenses, and be very grateful to you besides; for I shall learn the truth from you, which is more than I should do from most agents."

"I should like it very much," said William," but there is Allan—"

"I will take care of Allan. We are going on a little tour when we leave this place, which I think will just suit Allan."

Still William hesitated. "If there were time for me to hear from home."

"Let me speak to you a moment," said Major Wharton, drawing him aside.

They talked earnestly for a few minutes, or, rather, Major Wharton talked, and William listened; then William caught Major Wharton's hand, and wrung it heartily, and they turned back to the

stranger from the West, to inform him that if he would delay one day for William he would go with him.

Major Wharton was a little afraid that Allan might object to the arrangement, but he found him, on the contrary, much pleased with it. Neither did Mr. Clarke, of Fairhope, appear to regret it, when informed that his son had set out on a journey West, which would occupy him probably for several months. Perhaps he thought anything was better than remaining in Baltimore, and giving suppers at three hundred dollars a supper. Allan it was decided should travel with the Whartons during the summer, and return with them in the autumn.

While Major Wharton was still in the piazza of the hotel with William Clarke, a stage-coach drove up to the steps, and he saw Mr. Gaston among the passengers. The gentlemen greeted each other heartily, and Mr. Gaston promised as soon as he had rid himself of the dust of travel, to call on Mrs. Wharton and his friend Alice.

"In the meantime, can you tell me where Robert Grahame is?" asked Mr. Gaston; adding, "I have some letters for him, which arrived the day I left the Springs."

One of these letters announced the arrival of Donald Montrose and Richard Grahame in Boston,

and urged Robert's immediate return. Having read it, he returned it to his friends, the Whartons, determined, if possible, to secure a few minutes' tête-à-tête with Alice.

"I must at least communicate the contents of her cousin Donald's letter," he said to himself; "and for the rest"—a pause, during which his thoughts reverted to their meeting in the morning, and a smile lighted his eyes—"for the rest, I must be determined by circumstances."

The clear, open brow of Alice became overcast in spite of her as she heard that he must leave them in the morning, notwithstanding the relief she felt at his open announcement of the arrival of his brother in Boston with Donald Montrose. She turned her eyes upon him as he made this announcement; and the glance she met told her that all which had seemed strange in her was explained, or at least divined. Nothing, probably, would have made Alice happier than an interview which would have left no possibility of misunderstanding between them—at least of misunderstanding on those subjects most important to their peace—yet with true womanly inconsistency, she industriously thwarted his every effort to accomplish her own desire. As she did this again and again, it might have been supposed that he would have betrayed some impa-

tience in word or look, but there was none evident —scarcely even was there any regret, or if there were, it was mingled with something very like enjoyment. Her heart was now an open book to him, and the consciousness which made her shrink from the interview he sought was probably not discouraging to a lover. At length the hour for supper came, and Alice could not refuse his proffered arm. As they passed on through the long halls to the supper-room, he fell somewhat behind the rest of the party; and placing Donald's letter in her hand, said, "Read that at your leisure—it will show you how kindly your cousin feels to you, and you will also learn from it how I discovered my unpardonable injustice to you. I think you will forgive me for it; but it would be a great pleasure to me to hear you say so. Will you not give me that pleasure? You do forgive me?"

He saw her lips move, and bending down caught the murmured "Yes."

A slight pressure of the hand in which he placed Donald's letter, a low "Thank you! thank you—I have much to say to you, but we shall meet soon again;" and they hurried on to rejoin their companions who were already in the supper-room.

The next morning Robert Grahame was on the road to Boston.

CHAPTER VIII.

"For this the foolish over-careful fathers
Have broke their sleep with thoughts, their brains with care,
Their bones with industry."

"Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere;
Heaven did a recompense as largely send."

RICHARD GRAHAME, travelling with the feeling of security and peace which Donald's presence and kindness gave him, had recovered strength both of mind and body. Still he was somewhat relieved when informed that he would not be obliged immediately to face his brother. The severity with which Robert—himself compelled to trample under foot his nobler and purer tastes—had regarded Richard's first deviations from right, his first sacrifices of truth and honour to interest and passion, had rendered confidence between the brothers impossible. Richard admired his brother; the more, perhaps, because of the distance between them. Such integrity of purpose, such devotion of a whole life, seemed to him superhuman; he was not altogether without love for him, as was manifest by his angry defence of him when others

blamed; but the love was mingled with an awe which made his condemning eye a severer ordeal than anything else on earth to him, though he sometimes endeavoured, as we have seen, to conceal its real effect under a blustering exterior, wholly foreign to his usual manner. He had, doubtless, been led deeper into crime by his desire to conceal from his brother his earlier delinquencies, and thus Robert Grahame's departure from the law of Christian love had been punished by the deeper degradation of one who bore his name, and whose honour or shame must cast some light or shadow on himself.

We have thought it necessary to say so much that the reader might understand the relief with which Richard heard of his brother's absence. Of the gentle Mary he had no fear. And yet a nobler spirit would have felt her sorrow harder to bear than another's anger. Now, however, Mary felt at his return only the joy with which the father welcomed the prodigal. She welcomed him as from the grave; a grave on which she had not dared to look, so surrounded had it seemed with the blackness of darkness; she welcomed him back to hope and to a holier life. Was not the object which had taken him through such suffering to Montrose Hall, and which now brought him back

to Boston, a pledge of better things to come; a proof of a re-awakened conscience? She hoped so, and as she held him in her arms, and wept over the pale face, the sunken eyes, the bowed frame, she yet rejoiced in this hope.

The day after Donald's arrival he sent for a carriage and drove with Richard Grahame, who was still unable to walk so far, to Mr. Browne's. Donald's visit was expected, and he was ushered immediately into the library, leaving Grahame in the carriage, till his presence should be needed. In a very few minutes Mr. Browne entered, and as he came forward Donald could not but contrast their present meeting with the last they had had in this room: then, haughty and imperious, Mr. Browne had scarcely been willing to admit him to his presence, or to listen to his most reasonable demand when there; now, subdued and humble, he thanked him again and again for taking such a journey for his satisfaction. Donald was not vindictive, and the contrast gave him no pleasure. Indeed, as he saw the signs of advancing age—as he marked how rapidly these had increased in the last two years, and thought that the disgraceful conduct of his son had probably whitened the head and deepened the wrinkles on the brow—a sharp pang shot through his heart at the memory of his

own father, and the mortification and grief which he would have endured had he lived long enough to discover that the son to whom he had given his entire confidence had deceived him. Softened by such thoughts, Donald received Mr. Browne with respectful pity. The pity remained, but there was little respect mingled with it ere the interview closed. As Mr. Browne at one moment lamented the degeneracy of his son, recounted the expenses incurred for his education and the opportunities of social distinction he had enjoyed, and the next dwelt upon the losses he had sustained and was still likely to sustain by him, Donald was irresistibly reminded of Shylock mourning alternately his daughter and his ducats.

"He has spent more money already than I have done in my whole life, and he is still young."

"There is comfort at least in that, sir," said Donald; "you may hope that he will yet reform, and become all you wish."

His conscience smote him, even as he uttered the words. What hope was there of one so lost to all truth and honour—of one to whom no principle was sacred, and no tie was dear which stood between him and his selfish gratifications?

Mr. Browne only shook his head. He had no hope; perhaps if he had, the thought that the

money already lost could not be recovered would have poisoned it, but he began to think that he had already said too much. These admissions of his son's evil conduct would do no service to his own cause. He already regretted having made them: they were certainly uncalled for and impolitic; but Mr. Browne was growing old—he could not, as he had once been able to do, shut up bitter vexation in his heart, and wear over it a calm, undisturbed exterior; and Donald had found him at a moment when he was greatly disturbed. The morning's mail had brought him the following letter only half an hour before: —

New York, July 16th, 1837.

I am really sorry, my dear sir, to leave the United States without seeing you and my mother, but as my old Latin grammar taught me, "Necessitas non habet leges," a quotation which will show you, sir, that my classical education has not been, as you have sometimes thought, wholly lost upon me. To be brief, as time presses — disagreeable consequences might be the result of my longer stay in America, and I shall therefore sail to-day for Europe. In our last interview, about ten days since, you communicated to me the astounding information of the return of Richard Grahame,

whom I certainly thought out of all reach of a subpœna issued by any mortal court, when I sold you my claim against Lieutenant D. Montrose. The return of Grahame, will put the value of that claim as far below par as United States Bank stock, and I would advise you to part with it on any terms which Lieutenant Montrose may offer.

At the same time that you informed me of Richard Grahame's return, you may remember having mentioned to me as among the many claims upon you which rendered it inconvenient for you to meet my demands, that of the heirs of the late Charles Montrose, for the principal and interest of debts to his estate, recovered by you within a few years. As you mentioned that Mr. Gaston had been playing the Paul Pry in this affair, I felt assured that your apprehensions of an early presentation of the claims were not groundless, and sympathizing, as a dutiful son could not fail to do, with your anxiety, I determined, by marrying my cousin Alice, to secure at least a proportion of these claims to one of your own family. Another advantage of such a marriage would have been to secure for you better terms from Lieutenant Montrose, who, unless I greatly misunderstand him, would have had some very romantic notions about

bringing disgrace upon the husband of his cousin Alice; but alas!

"The best laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft a-gley;"

and so have mine, and there is nothing left for me but to retreat from a field that all must acknowledge to have been well fought. I feared I should have some difficulty in such a sudden emergency in raising the needful, but your credit, I am happy to say, is still good, spite of the general panic. Your checks on the Boston Bank and the Bank of Massachusettes for five thousand dollars each, enable me without delay, to obtain letters of credit on Europe to that amount, so that you need feel no uneasiness about me at present. I will let you know in time, when I need another supply.

I hope you will approve of my visit to Europe. The only principle which I can remember to have received with great emphasis from you, was to neglect nothing necessary to obtain and keep a high position in society, and you must be aware that nothing is more essential to this than the reputation of a travelled man.

I believe my mother loves me after a fashion of her own. Give my love to her, and, if you can,

disguise from her that I am a ruined and miserable man.

Your son,

GEORGE BROWNE.

Under the reckless and mocking tone of this letter, even without the confession contained in its last line, was visible the bitterness of a spirit disappointed in its chosen good. Higher good than the gratification of appetite, the indulgence of passion, the pomps and vanities and luxuries of life, George Browne knew not; and now he was fleeing from the just retribution of his vices, to a land of strangers, with a sum which, unless fortune favoured him there more than she had lately done at home, would scarcely suffice to sustain his prodigal habits for a few short months, and then, how dark the picture of his life! Appetites sharpened by indulgence, and deprived of their appropriate nourishment; desires excited to preternatural activity, and left ungratified. Can we imagine severer punishment to a sentient being? We might pursue the sketch till, with prophetic eye, we saw him incurring there the degradation from which he escaped here, or tottering under the burden of old age, accompanied by nothing which makes old age honourable or happy; but we forbear; the present is dark

enough; we will even hope that the mercy which the vilest may not seek in vain will cast some light upon the future. To that mercy we consign him.

And if the Justice which presides over the universe, has laid its hand upon the son, what shall be its award to the father who moulded his nature, who planted the seeds of the fruit of which he must eat? He hath sown the wind, and he shall reap the whirlwind. The son to whom he looked to secure, for all connected with him, the world's coveted honours, has brought shame and sorrow upon his gray hairs; his coldness and selfishness have alienated from him the affection and reverence of his sister's children. Little is left to him but the wealth to which he has sacrificed his life, and which may at any moment "make to itself wings and flee away." Every day his empty heart acknowledges the incapacity of wealth to fill its desires, and yet every day wealth becomes more completely his idol. It is no longer the luxuries or pomps which wealth may purchase, but wealth itself, the hard, cold, glittering gold, he loves, and according to that immutable law by which man becomes assimilated to the object of his supreme affection, he too must become hard, and cold, and false.

Look at them as they thus stand before you—

father and son—ye whose lives are given to gain, whose hopes are bounded by earth. You recall the honourable toils and wise plans of your youth—the success of your manhood. You talk with a pride not altogether without nobility, of what you have made yourselves, of what you have done to advance the material interests of your family, your friends, your country;—but ah! remember there are other and nobler interests than these,—interests which concern the undying spirit,—which elevate the man himself, not his position—enlarge his powers, not his houses and lands; remember that though you had poured the wealth of a kingdom into your coffers, you would be no nearer to the source and centre of happiness and honour than he on whom you have looked with contempt, because he has made pleasure his idol, and thrown away, as you say, his wealth in exchange for it. Idolaters are ye both, and of both it shall be said, "Your idols perish with you!"

The letter of George Brown, placing before us the principles of action in father and son, impelled us almost irresistably to this rapid sketch of their results, in making which we have been led far into the future and the distant. Let us return to the 21st of July, 1837, and to Mr. Browne's study. The business which had brought Donald there was

soon arranged by Mr. Browne refunding all he had received from him except the five thousand dollars, which Donald, assisted by the reminiscences of Richard Grahame, stated as the amount of his debt, and interest on that amount from the day of his father's death to the day of the first settlement at Montrose Hall. Robert Grahame arrived before the affair was definitely completed, and in time to remind Donald that Mr. Browne owed him interest on over forty thousand dollars of which he had enjoyed the use for nearly two years; nor did Mr. Browne dispute the claim when presented, but he succeeded in gaining something by computing the interest which he was to pay at 6 per cent.—the legal rate of interest in Massachusetts, and that which he was to receive at the Georgia rate of 8 per cent.

The meeting between Robert and Richard Grahame was not without deep emotion in both. Richard had learned to look with deeper condemnation upon his own faults, whilst the sincerity of his repentance, as manifested in his efforts to atone for the past, had awakened in his brother's heart a kindlier personal feeling towards him than had existed since their boyhood—a feeling under whose influence the memory of those early days when they shared the same home, were guarded

by the same care, and loved by the same hearts, resumed its power.

Mary, who loved both her brothers, though with affection differing as far as reverence and pity, hoped, yet dreaded, much for Richard from this meeting.

"If Robert be gentle and affectionate, as he so well knows how to be, Richard, in his present mood, will be completely melted, and all will be well," she said to herself; "but if he should be stern—I must speak to him."

"Robert, be tender; break not the bruised reed," she whispered, as she led him to the door of the room in which Richard awaited him.

She had laid her hand on Robert's, as she spoke.

"Mary—your hand is cold, it trembles; am I indeed so stern that you too fear me?"

"Never stern to me—I have no fear for myself, Robert."

"Have none for him, Mary—the past has not been all his fault; I, too, have been wrong."

In this spirit the brothers met, and before Richard could say "Forgive me!" he was folded to his brother's heart. As the arm that held him there was withdrawn, he sank into a chair, and covered his face with his hands, while his chest heaved with deep-drawn sobs.

Robert Grahame's hand rested kindly on his brother's shoulder.

"Do not let us speak of the last few years, Richard," he said, "neither of us have been quite blameless; we will go back to our early days at Springfield. By the by, has Mary told you that I have bought the old homestead there? I am trying to make it look just as it did of old. You must come and help me there. You shall have your old room there again—the boys' room we used to call it."

Richard could answer at first only with a silent pressure of the hand; but, as days passed, a quiet cheerfulness stole over him, but always quiet, it never rose to merriment. There was a memory in his heart of a lonely isle, a sound of dashing waves, with which merriment could not harmonize. Spite of Robert's kindness, spite of his own real attachment to his brother, we doubt whether Richard Grahame ever felt quite so much at ease with him as he did with Donald Montrose, who, with less depth of emotion and concentration of purpose, had a nature so frank, so quick in feeling, and so fearless, that it seemed to fit him peculiarly for a comforter to one who at once needed sympathy, and doubted whether his faults had not shut him out from it. There was also about Donald, natu-

rally, a joyousness of temperament, a peculiar susceptibility to every pleasurable influence, which made it almost impossible for gloom to live in his presence. It is true this had been for a time repressed by his disappointment in Alice, by his sorrow for his father's death, by the evil he had suffered, and yet more, by the evil he had done. But time had brought healing to these wounds; had revenged, beyond what he himself desired, the evil he had suffered, and had, by Heaven's mercy, retrieved the evil he had done, and Donald's was not a nature to be permanently shadowed by a cloud that had passed. Already his friends had begun to welcome back in him the sunny spirit which seemed for a time to have deserted them.

To Richard Grahame this was peculiarly agreeable, it dissipated his own gloom.

"Here is the sunlight, Mary," he would say, as he heard Donald's quick, elastic step, or clear, joyous voice; and to Mary, indeed, it became as the light of a new and brighter life.

From early girlhood, life had been to Mary a serious thing. To sympathize with the broken spirit of her father, with the slender hope, the depressing fear, the earnest action of one brother, and to mourn over the weakness of purpose and strength of impulse in the other, had been the daily

and hourly history of more than twelve years of her life. She had learned to think sorrow the staple of every life. Influenced by a very unphilosophical deduction, she experienced the most profound admiration for the powers which could enable one to live the life of a man - a life of endurance and of action—and to be joyous, naturally and innocently, and without effort, joyous. It was as if she had seen him raise the weight which had bowed the backs of others, and toss it hither and thither as a child's toy. And Mary began to dream dreams of what a blessed thing life would be under such bright influences, and to have visions of the happiness of one who should be strengthened and cheered in every rough and toilsome path by the companionship of such a spirit. And unused to feign, and unconscious of a feeling which required a mask, Mary wore none; and Donald sometimes read in her clear, truthful eyes, what made his heart throb with exultation, though the next moment he was ready to call himself an arrant coxcomb for believing that one, whom he had ever thought "wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best," could have any thing more than a tolerant regard for such a faulty being as he was. Still, the fancy once excited, could not be put wholly at rest with a "what a fool I am!" Neither was the subject

one on which a temper like Donald's could bear doubt. He must make observations, he must present tests of feeling, and every day the observations and the tests became more deeply interesting to him, until he felt that the chief happiness of his life depended on their result.

Had he forgotten Alice? the reader may ask. He had in truth begun to doubt whether the selfish, mad passion, with which he had pursued her so tyrannically, so relentlessly, deserved to be dignified with the name of love. It was certainly wholly unlike the tenderness which would now have made him silent for ever, rather than give pain to Mary Grahame. Indifference in Alice had been met by him always with anger and upbraiding; the suspicion of indifference in Mary only made him upbraid himself for folly in believing that she, so perfect herself, and so well acquainted with his imperfections, could have given him the rich treasure of her heart.

And thus weeks passed on, and Donald still doubted, still delayed. A week after the settlement of his business with Mr. Browne, he had accompanied the Grahames to the Elms, as Robert's place near Springfield was called. Before they left Boston, Mr. Gaston had returned, bringing letters from Charles, and Major Wharton and Isabelle, to

Robert Grahame and Donald. From these letters, they learned that Charles was about joining the Moultries, with whom Emily Willson still continued at Newport. Major Warton wrote that Allan was still forbidden to travel by the surgeon; that as soon as the interdict was removed, which he hoped would be in a few days, they would all come North, and would join Donald in Boston, should his business still require him to be there. At the Elms, Robert Grahame heard from Major Wharton, and Mary from Isabelle, who wrote, in reply to an urgent invitation that the whole party should join them there, that they were just on the wing for Niagara.

"Allan," Major Wharton wrote, "is quite well again. He has endured so much pain in our service, that I am very desirous to give him some pleasure. I find that he is a true lover of nature, and I have determined that he shall not go home without seeing the banks of the Hudson, Lake George, and Niagara. We shall be in New York for a few days, and Isabelle proposes to your sister to join us there and accompany us on our projected tour. Why cannot you all come? It may be of service to your brother.

"If you cannot join us, we shall probably see you at the Elms about the middle of September.

This will allow us to devote a month to travelling with Allan, and about the last of September, or the first of October, we shall be moving Southward again."

"How would you like it, Richard?" asked Robert Grahame, after reading this letter.

"I?—what?" exclaimed Richard, starting from a reverie.

"How would you like this little journey in company with our friends Major and Mrs. Wharton?"

"I—I would rather stay at home—I mean I would rather stay here,—but you—Mary—"

"Oh, I have no thought of going, Richard; I too prefer home," said Mary quickly.

"Must *you* go?" asked Richard, doubtfully, of Donald.

With a quick flush, and a laugh not quite unembarrassed, Donald answered, "Not if your sister will permit me to stay."

"I am sure the obligation will be all on our side, if you do us the favour to stay, especially as by Robert's questioning I suspect he intends to run away himself."

Mary looked smilingly at Robert, but he seemed neither to see nor hear, though his countenance wore the impress rather of a pleasant dream than

of very profound thought. Laying her hand on his arm to attract his attention, she said, "Is it so?"

"How?"

"Do you think of running away from us?"

"It is possible I may have to go to New York on business, and when there——"

"It is possible that you may accept Major Wharton's invitation and go farther, inveterate traveller that you are. Well, if Lieutenant Montrose can forgive you, I will."

"The truth is," said Robert Grahame, in reply to Donald's polite assurances, "I have never seen Niagara since I was a boy—too young to appreciate its sublimity, and I should like very much to see it again, and in such pleasant company, if you would promise that I should find you here on my return."

Donald promised,—again with a laughing proviso that Miss Grahame did not dismiss him before that time, and the next day Robert Grahame set off for New York.

Time did not hang heavily on the hands of those who were left at the Elms. The exterior of this place we have described, as it appeared after the neglect of years; but much has now been done to restore to it the beauty of an earlier day. The

lawn appeared again soft and smooth; the shrubbery had been replanted; the gardens, descending in successive terraces to the river, showed the careful tending of experienced hands as well as the supervision of a tasteful mind. The summer-house had been not only rebuilt, but enlarged, and furnished with simple but comfortable couches. There Mary spent many hours with book or work, finding in the perfumed air around, in the dash of the wave, in the very feeling of the air from the water, a spell which bore her far back into the past,—though of late the dreams which began in the past stretched far on into the future too.

Within the house, the spirit of improvement had been no less active. Entering it by a stone porch from the lawn, you passed first into a wide hall, on either side of which was a large and well-proportioned room, one of which had been newly and handsomely furnished as a dining, and the other as a drawing-room. Crossing the hall to the extremity opposite the porch, you found two doors, that on the right admitting you into the cosiest of breakfasting rooms, looking upon the flower-gardens and the river, and that on the left into a library, whose shelves, though not yet filled, bore many noble volumes collected in Europe. A few good pictures—copies made for Robert Grahame,

in Italy, from the world's master-pieces, hung on its walls. It was evident that here, if anywhere at the Elms, would be extravagant expenditure. Elsewhere there was comfort, convenience, elegance, but nothing gorgeous, nothing out of character with the country home of an American gentleman of refined but simple habits—nothing that would recall, by its glaring contrast, the factory and the cottage at Flowerdale. Here, in the library, it was evident the proprietor did not shun their remembrance, for on either side of a picture of the home of his fathers in England, hung one of the factory, and of that simple cottage. To those visitors at the Elms, who desired amusement more active than a library afforded, the river offered excellent angling; a graceful little pleasure-boat, anchored not far from shore, invited to a sail, and there were horses in the stable, carriages in the carriage house, and a country around which was full of varied beauty.

We doubt whether Donald would have felt loneliness or weariness at the Elms, even without those resources for the diversion of the idler; with them he certainly never experienced either, and wondered what Mary meant by "being rejoiced on his account," when Mr. Gaston and Ellen came to pass a week with them. Mr. Gaston felt a pe-

culiar interest in the Elms. He had spent many pleasant hours there in days gone by—and he had purchased the place for Robert Grahame, during his long absence, and many of the improvements had been begun under his direction. The interest with which he examined into the progress of these, the admiration he expressed of what had been added to his own designs, and his occasional suggestions of the advantage to be derived from opening a new point of view here, or shutting out an unsightly object there, with the sympathy which Mary evinced in all his tastes and plans, gave new ideas to Donald of what might be done for his own beautiful home.

If the intense energy and activity of the inhabitants of the Northern part of the United States make it sometimes wholesome advice to them to "let very well alone," the *insouciance* of those of the South, yet more frequently requires to be aroused to the conviction, that the most lavish gifts of nature do not render man's action unnecessary.

But this was not the most important lesson which Donald received at this time respecting his powers as master of that home.

"Does your morning service begin so early?" asked Donald, the first Sunday he was at the Elms, as Mary, with her bonnet on, entered the

[illegible] to Robert before she [illegible] to the carriage which was already in waiting for her.

"Not for you," said Mary with a smile, "Robert will show you the way—the service does not begin till eleven."

Conrad glanced at the master-clock—it announced the hour to be nine. Mary was already moving to the door, and he hastened to attend her to the carriage. As he assisted her into it, he said, "May I infringe on feminine prerogative, so far as to acknowledge that my curiosity is in very active exercise?"

"On what subject?" asked Mary.

"The cause which takes you so early to church."

"I go to meet a class of young women belonging to the factory, with whom I spend an hour or two on Sunday," said Mary simply, yet not without a slight flush upon her cheek.

"That was so graciously answered that it encourages me to question again. I hope it is not indiscreet to ask where that long Thursday morning visit was made to which I was forbidden to attend you?"

"To ask may not be indiscreet—but to answer—I must reflect on that."

"Well, I hope you find your position favourable to reflection," he said playfully, as she seated herself in the carriage,—adding, as he placed his foot upon the step, and resting his arm upon the door, looked admiringly upon her, "it is particularly agreeable to me."

"But it may not be so to those who are waiting for me."

"Which consideration will, I hope, induce you to answer quickly."

"Do you really care to know?"

"Certainly I do."

"My visit was made to the school which Robert has established for the factory children."

"I am afraid curiosity is a principle that grows by indulgence—I am suffering from an irresistible desire to know what you do there."

"You yourself teach me the danger of indulging you—besides it would delay me too long—indeed I fear I am already late."

Donald saw she was in earnest and no longer detained her; but as the subject really interested him, he did not let it drop, until he had obtained the fullest satisfaction upon it. The information which he obtained by more circumlocutory methods we will give to the reader directly.

The experience of Robert Grahame's life had

given him a more than ordinarily earnest sense of the value of education, and religion had superadded to this the Christian's feeling of obligation to Heaven and to his fellow-man. Under these impressions he had early endeavoured to do all in his power for the intellectual and religious education of those who had been brought under his influence;—but his power had been small until the success of his invention brought him wealth beyond his most sanguine expectations. His first "thank-offering" —for as such he regarded it—had been the establishment of the school to which Mary had alluded. He had engaged as its teacher a country clergyman, whose health had for many years prevented his preaching, and who, having neither wife nor unmarried children, gladly accepted the small house in this quiet, secluded place, and the salary of three hundred dollars, which Robert Grahame offered him. From him, the children of those who worked at the factory, and occasionally the younger hands employed there, received instruction in the essentials of education, and if a boy showed unusual talent, it was the wish of Robert Grahame that he should not be limited to these essentials: but there was one thing very important to girls which the good man could not teach—the use of those instruments so indispensable to the advance

of civilization,—needle and scissors,—and to this task Mary's Thursday mornings were devoted.

But this was not all that Robert Grahame had done for the advantage of the little community to whom he felt that God had placed him in a peculiarly responsible position.

When he paid off the incumbrances on the factory, his first thought had been to sell it off, and thus relieve himself at once of these responsibilities and of a business peculiarly distasteful to him; but this thought was soon overpowered by the interest and the sense of obligation which had been the growth of so many years. And after this one contest between inclination and principle, the well-being of the operatives at the factory mingled with every picture of his future life. And something of the picture had been made a reality. The old boarding-house, which formerly offered rude and scanty accommodation to these operatives, had been pulled down; and about fifty small houses with a garden attached to each, built on the southern slope of the hill below which stood the factory, made a beautiful picture of smiling rural life. There stood the schoolmaster's house, a cottage somewhat larger than the rest and of neater finish—circumstances not without their significancy and their influence—and there, crown of all the

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wrong—my conscience condemns it. Ah! if I had such a helper as Mary."

From this point the thoughts of Donald were generally diverted into a train as little profitable to the negroes as they would probably prove to the reader.

Robert Grahame had been absent from the Elms about three weeks, when Mary received a letter from him, announcing that he was wending his way homewards, accompanied by the Whartons, Alice, and Allan, and that they might be expected to arrive within a few days of this announcement. It was afternoon, and Mary was in the summer-house when Donald entered with this letter. He had ridden over to Springfield, found this letter and one to himself communicating the same information. As Mary looked up at him, at his entering, there was somewhat of gravity—she even thought of agitation—in his face, which made her unseal her letter without an apology, as quickly as she received it, and glance rapidly over its contents He stood leaning against the side of the door as she read.

"How glad I am!" she exclaimed, joyously, as she concluded, "They are all coming. How glad I am!"

She looked up to Donald for sympathy, and with

scarcely a smile, he answered, "Are you very glad?"

"To be sure I am *very* glad. I shall be glad to see them myself, but I am much more glad on your account. I know how dull it must have been to you here, Lieutenant Montrose. I shall never forget your kindness in staying with my poor Richard, when there was so much to tempt you elsewhere. It was so unselfish—"

"Excuse me for interrupting you," said Donald, still looking and speaking gravely, "but I cannot accept your praise; it was not unselfish at all."

"It is generous in you to say so—"

"It is *not* generous!" exclaimed Donald, with emphasis, as if half angry at her persistence; "it is not generous," he continued, speaking very rapidly, "unless it be generous to speak the simple truth. I stayed for my own pleasure; I would stay for ever at your side if you would permit me."

The seal was broken, and the secrets of his heart were all revealed to her in that hour; and as Mary read them, she learned by the feelings they awakened to understand herself. Ere they left that summer-house they were pledged to share together the weal and woe of life. The perfumed air, the dashing wave were there, still laden with their memories of the past, but her every sense

was dead to them now. The past was a *dead* past indeed, for there was no life where he was not. Her mind was filled with one thought, her heart with one feeling, and the thought and the feeling were the same. Need we give it a name?

"And Richard likes the South, he will not be parted from you, my Mary; he shall go with us, and our home shall be his."

Her heart smote her that she had not remembered Richard, yet even as she thanked him for such sweet thoughtfulness, those two little words, "our home," touched a deeper chord in her heart than aught else he had said.

CHAPTER IX.

"She is a woman and beloved—and 'tis enough but so."

ALICE MONTROSE seemed in the last few weeks to have unlived three years of her life. The conflict with the passions of others, the struggles with a hard unyielding world, not for herself only, but for her mother too, had developed a strength and depth of nature in her of which those who knew her best had never dreamed. The glad and tender child had seemed to spring at once into a woman, patient to endure and persevering to act. Then came a time when all appeared peaceful and still, and she who had courageously borne the storm, seemed to grow faint and weary beneath the sunshine and the calm. Those who watched the fading cheek and the dim and weary eye, said "Her powers have been overtasked, it is no wonder they have given way." They never dreamed that she was undergoing a more terrible conflict

with herself; that she was engaged in a struggle not with outward and visible influences, but with traitors in the very citadel of life. A worm was gnawing at the root which the swaying winds had only strengthened. The few lines from her diary which Isabelle had permitted herself to read, and the explanation to them furnished by Robert Grahame in an hour of alarm and agitation, had given some clue to the truth. Of the insight thus received, Isabelle with delicacy and honour, which we regret to say are by no means universal in her sex, said nothing either to Alice herself or to others. No ill-timed jest—no mysterious allusion from her brought the blood to the cheeks of Alice, or made her feel that the veil had been torn from the innermost sanctuary of her heart.

And little do they who are less delicate know how deep and irreparable is the injury done to a woman's nature by rudely pressing beyond that veil. But one hand on earth can lift it without desecrating the sacred mysteries it covers. And scarcely less is the wrong when he to whom it is permitted to lift that veil, stands before it, and because it has become to him semi-transparent, and he admires the graceful effect of varying light and shadow created by the waving of its folds as his very breathing stirs them, raises it not. Let

the hard scoffer mock if he will; we say it is a sin deeper than his of old who placed his captive on the rack that he might paint the distended muscle and the writhing form. What is the worst physical agony to that inflicted by crushed pride, outraged delicacy, and profaned affection? Of such wrong Robert Grahame could not be guilty, yet somewhat he tried the confiding nature of our gentle Alice, and thus drew on himself for a time the anger of the more impulsive Isabelle. There had been a moment in Baltimore when he and Alice each read the other's heart. Time had no power to erase the memory or the influences of that moment from his steadfast mind, and he forgot that woman's greater diffidence must render her ever distrustful of her own perceptions, and doubtful consequently of that which rests wholly on their truth. In the intoxication of a hope so assured and so sweet, that he could almost have been willing to hope thus for ever, feeling that there was in his present existence a fulness of life of which he had never dreamed; it may be, with all his confidence, shrinking with a nameless reluctance,—a reluctance which could hardly have been doubt of her, which certainly was not doubt of himself, from that last decisive word which should put all to the hazard, he had said to him-

self, "For these few weeks I will live for the present; it shall be, if heaven will, a season of tranquil enjoyment untroubled by change, to which we shall both look back with unmingled pleasure when it has become the past. And it shall be at my own beloved home, where my mother's spirit ever seems to be hovering in blessing over me, that I will seek the assurance which shall make my joy doubly sure: the pledge will seem more sacred which is there given, and received."

And so day glided after day, with hope within and beauty around them—white days in life's calendar—and each day brought their hearts nearer, and in Grahame's heart was the fulness of content, and in that of Alice, at times, a bewildering happiness, and at times a momentary trouble: a fear lest all this should pass away, and with it the very life of life, so far as this world was concerned. At such a moment, Isabelle found her the day of their arrival at Lake George, as she sat in her own room, at a window which gave her a view of its transparent waters, its bold shores, and hundred smiling islands; yet with her thoughts far away from all the beauty before her eyes, as was evident by their sad expression, and by the tears which stood upon her cheek. Isabelle had

entered unseen. As she spoke, Alice quickly averted her face, and too delicate to notice what she evidently sought to conceal, Isabelle found some excuse for withdrawing: but she went with a conviction that Alice was unhappy, that Robert Grahame was trifling with her, and she and Major Wharton had been imprudent, in allowing him such privileges, while yet he had not declared his intentions. "At least we must get rid of this visit to his own home," she said to herself, and sought Major Wharton, to propose it. She found him in their own apartment.

"Bella," he said as she entered, "Grahame has gone to engage a boat for us. We thought you and Alice would like to go on the water, and Grahame offered to make the arrangements for us."

Isabelle did not reply immediately, and when she did, her reply seemed to him wide of the mark,—it was, "Edward, I wish we could get off from going home with Mr. Grahame."

He looked at her with some surprise, and, naturally enough, asked "Why?"

She hesitated a moment, then coming nearer to him, letting her hand rest upon his shoulder, as he sat, and her eyes meet his fully, she answered, "I cannot tell you my reason, and yet I think it a very good one—can you trust me?"

"Your intentions fully, *ma belle*," he said with a smile, as he took the little hand in his, "your judgment not quite so entirely, if the reason be one that interests your feelings."

"It does not concern my feelings so much as those of another," observed Isabelle.

"A little more hesitation on my part," said Major Wharton, laughing, "and I see I shall learn all about it; so to save your reputation for keeping a secret, I had better say at once, that I am quite willing to do as you wish, provided you will give me some fair excuse for breaking my promise to Grahame; who will, I think, be greatly disappointed."

"Will it not be enough to say what is quite true, that we are impatient to be on our way homeward?"

"Perhaps so," said Major Wharton; and supposing that the *we* referred to Alice and herself, and that the secret motive also had reference to Alice, he told Robert Grahame when he saw him next, that "the ladies" were so impatient to be on their way homeward, that he feared it would be out of his power to make the visit which he had promised to the Elms at present.

A momentary start—a sudden gravity in Robert Grahame, marked his surprise. He did not speak

immediately, but walked at Major Wharton's side, seemingly buried in thought. Suddenly he raised his head, and fixed his eyes upon the Major's face, as he remarked, "You said 'the ladies;' am I to understand that Miss Montrose has expressed this impatience?"

Major Wharton felt there was peculiar interest in the question, and would gladly have evaded a direct answer, which he feared must occasion pain; but there was a power in those calm, deep eyes, which commanded the truth, and would be satisfied with nothing else.

"I cannot say that she has *expressed* it," was his answer, "for I have not spoken with her, but Isabelle gave me the impression that it was the wish of both."

Robert Grahame was satisfied, and Major Wharton saw, to his surprise, that there was a smile in his eyes as he turned them away.

The boat was an admirable boat. The boatmen excellent. The lake just ruffled by the gentlest of breezes, its waters so transparent that all the secrets of the finny kingdom, far, far below, were exposed to human eyes; and its islets, green and lovely as the Hesperides; yet for some time a cloud seemed to hang over our little party. Isabelle, who had appropriated Mr. Grahame to

herself, was grave and silent; Alice, who found herself, she knew not how or why, escorted by Major Wharton, thought Lake George hardly so agreeable as the Hudson and Niagara; Major Wharton was silent, and so at first was Robert Grahame; Allan never talked in such scenes—his whole poet-soul was in his eyes.

But it was not long thus. At Robert Grahame's proposal, they landed on one of those rocky islets. An arbour, thatched with green boughs had been erected there; rough benches had been placed within it, around a rock, which, rising a foot or two above the ground, and clothed with soft, green moss, deserved its name of the Fairies' Table; and at a sign from Robert Grahame the boatmen brought up some baskets, which, covered with a boat cloak, had been brought there unsuspected by any of the party but himself. They were quickly unpacked by willing, though it may be, somewhat awkward hands, and the table covered with refreshments—fruits, cakes, and even a mould of frozen orangeade, furnished by mine host of the Lake House: and now Robert Grahame threw off his reserve, and not only talked himself, but won others to talk too, till the cloud lifted; and long after the sun had sunk below the hills, reddening the waters with its parting beams, all was warmth

and brightness in the little party. Two of them, indeed, talked but little. Alice was content to listen, and to enjoy her perception of the influence on others of that power which stirred the depths of her own being; and Allan, he was content to look, to fill his soul with beauty, to be one day reproduced in song.

"Well, Allan," cried Major Wharton, attracted by his silence to observe him, "what are you thinking of."

Allan answered only by a pleased smile.

"Come, Allan, we have given you our thoughts —let us have yours," said Isabelle, gaily.

"I fear they were not thoughts at all, but feelings—words cannot tell them—music might."

"Ah! that is what we want—music," said Isabelle. "Alice, you can give us some. Pray sing 'I know a bank whereon the wild thyme grows,' for us."

Alice loved to give pleasure, and soon her clear, rich voice, round and flute-like, was mingling with the rippling of the wave, as she sang to music, well "married to immortal verse," those beautiful lines to which Isabelle had referred. No compliments awaited her song, but she was asked for another and another, which she sang, and the moon, now nearly at the full, was pouring its

golden light upon the waves before they left the islet, which, in compliment to the song or the table, they called "Titania's Isle." As they returned, they were as silent as they had been in coming; but the silence was of a very different character; it was now the silence of souls too full for speech—what Richter calls the language of spirit. Isabelle was again at her husband's side, and Alice beside Robert Grahame. They landed at a point distant nearly a quarter of a mile from the hotel, and before half that distance was passed, Isabelle, Major Wharton, and Allan had lost sight of the remaining members of the party, who had lingered beside the shore of the lake.

Strange mystery to us is that quick communication of spirit with spirit, without any perceptible medium, which we have all experienced at some moments of our lives. How is it, we ask ourselves, that before a word was spoken or a look given, we understood, we felt—aye *felt* is the word—as if it had been the thrill of an electric current from the silent and invisible air? Thus Alice *felt* the thought in Grahame's mind even before, pausing beside the moonlit lake, he said, "Are words necessary, Alice, to express what you must know so well?"

The warmth of the evening had caused her to

throw far back from her face the little hood she wore, so that the moonlight fell full upon it, and he could read every emotion of her heart in its quivering features, and rapidly varying colour. Nor was his serenity undisturbed, strong man as he was. The deep, low tones in which he spoke, trembled with intensity of feeling.

"Alice," he said, "long before I dared to confess it, even to my own heart—from that night in which with the innocence and confidingness of a little child you clung to me in your terror, I loved you; I did not dare confess it, as I have said, even to myself, I could not woo a gentle nature to partake of my rough, stern life; but though I turned resolutely away from the contemplation of your loveliness, the truth soon forced itself upon me. Do you remember one afternoon that you visited the factory at Grahameville? Can you recall the conversation that passed between us as we walked from it? I told you that beauty had its uses, and even as I spoke, I felt that your beauty—the beauty in which grace and tenderness and delicacy seemed harmonized into one exquisite ideal—would give to my life all after which my soul vainly thirsted. I felt this, and from that moment honour bade me withdraw from you, lest I should forget your own happiness, and the obligation imposed on me by

your uncle's noble confidence. Heaven gave me strength to obey the voice of honour and of duty. I saw you depart from me without a word, a look, that could have told you I loved, and a darker shadow fell upon my life. The sacrifice was complete. Then came fortune, and with fortune hope of a higher good—hope even of you—of you, my Alice. We will not talk now of how it was dashed —of how I wandered for months, even for years, amid the beauties of nature and of art, with a heart in which their charms could scarcely kindle life, nor of that yet more bitter pang—but of that I cannot speak now—you have forgiven me, have you not? and will you not now confirm the hope which that forgiveness inspired? I have dared to call you my Alice, and you have not reproved the bold words. Are you indeed mine own?"

We are sure that no action for breach of promise could ever have been brought against Alice for what she said in reply; and yet Grahame seemed quite satisfied, and for a while he could only repeat his gratitude to her whom he called by every endearing epithet which the heart and the fancy could furnish. She was the "star of his night," "the flower of his life," "his dearest of friends;" and then, with a little pause of hesitation, and in a whisper, as if he feared to breathe it, even

to the air — "all precious names in one — my wife."

"And this bond becomes doubly dear, my Alice, from the thought that it is not for this life only; that we may so live, and so love, that death shall be to us but the removal to a more blessed home where our spirits shall mingle in a closer and a holier union. Our spirits—I feel as if even here we shall make but one complete, perfect spirit, of which you shall furnish all which is pure and graceful and tender, and I—what shall I give you, dearest?"

And for the first time Alice spoke out full and clear. "You shall give me strength to stand upright, courage to be true, strength and courage to walk ever in the straight path of duty, without turning to the right or the left."

"So will I ever, my beloved Alice, with Heaven's help," he said, and raised the hand he held to his lips.

They entered the hotel, and proceeded to the door of the saloon in which they knew Isabelle and Major Wharton would be expecting them; but Grahame perceived a slight reluctance in the movements of Alice, and said, "Would you rather go to your own room? I will send Mrs. Wharton to you."

Alice went and Isabelle soon joined her. To

Alice it was a weary effort to talk; it was clipping the wings of her spirit, and bringing her down to the common level. But Isabelle made few demands on her except as a listener. Isabelle was delighted, but her delight was of that character which excites, not that full, perfect content which makes us still —absorbed in the contemplation of our own joy. There was one part of her conversation, if conversation that could be called which was all on one side, to which Alice could have listened for ever; it was her praises of Grahame.

"He is a noble being, Alice—in his way as noble as Edward in his: and do you know Edward says that he considers him the greatest hero he has ever known; and that is a great deal for a military man to say of a civilian."

Alice was silently considering the qualities that go to make a hero, when Isabelle spoke again—

"What singular power there is in those deep, dark eyes! Alice you need never attempt to conceal anything from him; he will but turn those eyes upon you, and your whole soul will be open before him."

And Alice listened and thought what should she ever desire to conceal from *him?*

"By the by," resumed Isabelle, he saw through me completely to day. You looked so sad to-day,

when I came in here, that I fancied he was making you unhappy; and blaming myself for having given him such opportunities, I made Edward tell him that we could not go home with him. Do not look so outraged Alice; I did not tell either of them my reason; but I might as well have told Mr. Grahame, for when he sent me here this evening, he said, with one of those looks which speak volumes, that you had something to tell me which he hoped would remove my objections to the visit Major Wharton had promised him. But I am not sure it will; I am not sure that it would be quite right. Do you think it would?"

"I do not know," said Alice, hesitatingly.

"Right" so used, meant, of course, according to prescribed rules on such occasions.

"I think," said Isabelle, musingly, "we must give it up, and write to Donald to meet us in New York; Mr. Grahame will, of course, go there with us. Poor Donald!" she sighed, as she kissed the cheek of Alice for good night, and poor Donald mingled with the visions of a happy life which floated through the mind of Alice ere she slept. The morrow brought consolation to them for "poor Donald," and relief to their doubts respecting the proprieties, for both Isabelle and Robert Grahame received letters announcing the engagement of

Donald and Mary, and urging, with almost irresistible reasons, the desire of Donald that the marriage should take place before his return to the South. To Isabelle he wrote, "If you and Alice will come and plead my cause, I think Mary will not refuse you. Her heart, I am sure, is with me, and she is above mere conventionalisms, yet naturally she desires to know that my friends will approve her—I have written to my mother. She always admired Mary. I have but one sorrow in the world; it is that my father cannot embrace her as his daughter."

This letter was decisive. The day after its reception our party were on their way to the Elms.

CHAPTER X.

"Sail forth into the sea of life,
Oh gentle, loving, trusting wife;
And safe from all adversity
Upon the bosom of the sea
Thy comings and thy goings be."

THE ninth of October was one of those bright days of autumn which can boast a richer loveliness than is to be found in the glowing summer or the coy spring.

"Blessed is the bride that the sun shines on!" had been one of the proverbs heard by Donald in his childhood from his negro nurses, and he had imbibed so much of their superstition that a few clouds, floating in the west at sunset on the previous evening had excited in him a more anxious feeling than he would have been willing to acknowledge. It is scarcely necessary after this to say that the ninth of October was the day appointed for his marriage with Mary Grahame, who had been unable to resist his solicitations, supported by her own brothers and by Donald's friends, and

not very violently opposed, it may be, by her own heart.

Fear not, reader; we are not going to inflict on you a description of the bride's toilette, nor even to sketch her picture as she stood at the altar—and yet it was a picture well worth sketching, and one that made that simple country church, in which her vows were uttered, as rich in interest as any on which that bright autumnal sun looked down. Suffice it that, to the eyes and heart of one, she has always been, and will ever be, even to the end of life, the type of perfect womanhood, as she stood that day at his side, pure and fresh as the white roses gleaming in her dark hair, earnest as the vows she uttered, and gentle as the voice in which she spoke them.

The evening before the day appointed for the marriage of his sister, Robert Grahame had presented her with a deed, securing to her, during her life, and to her heirs after her, the sum of fifty thousand dollars. At the same time he settled on his brother Richard an annuity of five hundred dollars—a sum sufficient to secure him from the necessity of labouring, with broken health and failing mind, yet not enough to tempt him from the safe harbour of home into the world, in which

he had already made such shipwreck of peace and of character.

There was one thing of which Robert Grahame never lost sight—the work which God had assigned to him. Those who seemed to have been thus committed to his charge were bound to him by no human ties; they were not his kindred—they were not his feudatories—they were not, in any absolute sense, his dependents. They might at any time leave his service for that of another, and though he could, doubtless, supply their place with others, he believed that he would thus labour under the greatest possible disadvantages in his projects of usefulness—that, as the strokes which, directed to one point, would cut deep into the tree, scarcely make an impression on it when they fall now here and now there, so the efforts which would do much to enlighten, to elevate, and to bless, if for a series of years directed to one community, would lose all efficiency if divided among many communities To bind his people to him was, then, his first desire, and for this he availed himself of every opportunity of evincing that kindly interest in them which might attract to him their affection, the strongest of all bonds. He would not, of course, neglect such an occasion as his

sister's marriage presented, for showing his desire that they should all rejoice in his joy; accordingly, on the day of the marriage, the factory was closed at mid-day, a table was spread with refreshments under a booth on the village green, and every young girl connected with the factory received, in Mary's name, the present of a handsomely bound Bible.

Charles Montrose, Mr. Gaston, and Ellen arrived at the Elms on the 8th, and set out again, on their return to Boston, on the 9th, only about two hours after the bridal party left the church. Robert Grahame would have more readily forgiven them for this than for carrying Alice with them—a measure which he would have resisted with all his influence, had not both Mr. Gaston and Charles declared that her presence in Boston was necessary to the completion of very important business. Mr. Gaston rather avoided any explanation of the character of this business, but Charles Montrose privately informed his friends that he and his family were under the deepest obligations to Mr. Gaston, who had instituted measures for an investigation into his father's affairs, which, had they been resisted by Mr. Browne, as there was reason till lately to suppose they would be, must have proved very expensive. The steps taken had already brought to light many

claims recovered by Mr. Browne, when that gentleman, shortly after the evasion of his son, volunteered a statement of the present condition of the estate of his deceased brother-in-law, giving certain plausible reasons for a delay which Charles believed that only Mr. Gaston's interference had terminated. This statement showed a surplus after the payment of the debts of the estate of some thirty or forty thousand dollars. Mr. Gaston was not quite satisfied with this; he believed the amount to be greater; but Mrs. Charles Montrose seemed so painfully affected by the thought of litigation with her brother, that Charles consented to receive it and to acquit Mr. Browne of all farther responsibilities. It was in relation to the transfer of this property that the presence of Alice was required.

"Why do you not come with us?" asked Charles Montrose of Robert Grahame, observing his evident dissatisfaction with this arrangement. "Isabelle and Wharton will forgive you, I am sure"—appealing to them with his eyes.

"Certainly—certainly," said Major Wharton.

"The more readily," said Isabelle, with a laugh, "that, from present appearances, Mr. Grahame could not be expected to add much to the agreeableness of our society if he remained."

Robert Grahame answered only by a quiet smile.

"Then," continued Charles, "you cannot fear that Donald and our cousin Mary"—Charles had a true Southern love of relationship—"would miss you very much; and last of all, it will be but for one week, when they will all follow us to Boston on their way home."

And so it was determined—Robert Grahame indulging his own inclination the more readily, because his engagements during the winter would be of such a character as to make it well nigh impossible for him to leave home, and he would probably therefore not see Alice again until the spring, when they were to be married at Montrose Hall.

Robert Grahame had at first hoped to induce Alice to remain as his wife when his sister left his home. His entreaties on this subject had been met by no affectations, for her soul was as simple and truthful as his was generous and noble. Her only answer had been, "My mother!" and it had been enough. Robert Grahame knew that the feeble health of Mrs. Montrose made it impossible that she should come on to the marriage of her daughter and return to the South again before the winter set in; and almost equally impossible that

she should spend the ensuing winter in a northern climate. It was clearly the duty of Alice, therefore, to return to her mother and remain with her until she could accompany her to her future home; and he who had made duty the ruler of his own life was not likely to make her negligent of it whom he had chosen as his life's companion.

"Alice, do you remember that beautiful cove in the Bay, about half a mile from Montrose Hall, just by the wood which we used to call Laurel Grove?" asked Charles, as he sat one day with his sister and Robert Grahame, at Mr. Gaston's, where Alice stayed during her visit to Boston.

"Where you used to say you would build yourself a house?" inquired Alice.

"Yes, and where I am going to build myself a house. Donald says, if I will make my home there he will give me as many acres as I want for a house and the grounds around it. To live there, will be the fulfilment of the pleasantest dream of my life."

"I hoped to induce you to settle near us whenever your profession should permit you to settle at all," said Robert Grahame.

"The desire to be near you and Alice almost made me reject Donald's offer; but two things decided me — Emily's liking for the South, and my mother's health."

"But my mother will be with me," said Alice.

"In the summer she will—if you and she desire it, that is; but in the winter—depend on it, Alice, she needs a Southern winter."

For a moment something of loneliness came over the soul of Alice, at the thought of this separation from all she had known in earlier life. Tears rushed to her eyes, and though in the dim light in which they were sitting Charles did not perceive them, there was another present who did. Robert Grahame rose, and crossing the room to the window in the shadow of whose drapery Alice was seated, stood by her side, leaning his arm on the high back of her chair, and suffering his hand to rest for a moment on her bowed head. It was but a moment, yet Alice grew strong beneath that touch; and, as looking up she met Robert Grahame's smile, she smiled in return, and with an almost unconscious movement placed her hand in his. It was given and received as a new pledge of entire trust, and Robert Grahame did not relinquish it, while he continued his conversation with Charles.

"Do you intend resigning—that you talk of making a home on shore?"

"No—I love my profession, though it does offer but poor pay and slow promotion. I had almost determined to resign, feeling that it would be im-

prudent to trust to my pay for support as a married man; but now that I have something else to depend on, nothing would tempt me to leave the navy."

"But you must be a great deal away from home."

"Yes—but it will be so sweet to come back to it; besides, I shall love to think of Emily and my mother as dwelling together under my own roof-tree. How my heart swells with grateful joy at the thought!"

"It will not abate your joy, I hope, that your mother will have her home at the Elms, with us, except when she thinks a change to a warmer climate necessary. We shall hope to induce your Emily to come with her often. Why should not ours be *her* summer home too?"

"Thank you! thank you!" said Charles, and the slight pressure of the little hand Robert Grahame held gave him yet more pleasing thanks.

The Winter had gone, and the "sunny South" wore the gay livery of Spring, just brightening into the full glory of Summer, when these three met again. It was early in April the first week—and Robert Grahame had come to claim his promised bride, and with a trust which time had only strengthened, Alice placed her hand in his and stood by his side, before the man of God, to utter

and receive those vows which death or crime only could absolve. We have sworn to speak the truth and the whole truth, and though we fear that it may expose her to the contempt of some "strong-minded American women," we must acknowledge that our lovely Alice was quite unconscious of any wrong to herself or to her sex in the vows thus interchanged. Nay, more, she thought she could recognise something of the wisdom of Him who doeth all things well, in the arrangement by which he who had the strength to guard, should also have the commission to guide in the pilgrimage of life, and that she, whose more spiritual nature craves ever communion with something higher, nobler, than herself—who through her strong affections grows ever into the likeness of what she loves, should be guarded from surrendering her life to an influence which could not elevate her, by the very command to marry only where she could, without violence to her own soul both "honour and obey." To Alice, natural and simple in her affections as in all else, marriage was not so necessary a condition of happiness as that she should enter it before she had found him whom she could reverence—him, to whose strong arm and clear head and upright soul she could unfalteringly commit her earthly destiny. To choose an inferior as our ruler, and then to

blame or deny the ordinance of Heaven which established such a relation, is scarcely the part of wisdom.

It was therefore without a reservation—without one shadow of doubt on the clear mirror of her soul, that Alice stood in her girlish beauty, in the halls that had sheltered her childhood, surrounded by friends and kindred, and spoke the words which bound her to leave them all for another home and another heart.

"My Alice,"—"my pet,"—"my darling,"—such were the tender words which fell on her ears, amid caresses and tears and blessings from full hearts, which faltering voices scarce could speak, and through them all the young bride felt the pressure of one clasping hand and heard one whisper—too low for other ears—"My wife!"

By the request of Charles and Donald Montrose, Robert Grahame had consented to spend the month of April at the South. Charles was already established at Laurel Grove with his pretty Emily, and some part of this month was passed with them.

There were many things at the South deeply interesting to Robert Grahame; he found there more simple forms of life, less of show, and more of natural, unsophisticated enjoyment,—less frequent

thorough individual cultivation, yet a more general love of reading and acquaintance with literature—above all, he found true, earnest hearts, "open as day to melting charity," and shrinking from no sacrifice which duty demanded, and he felt even before he had seen, that they could not be the monsters of selfishness and cruelty which partisan writers had represented them. He spoke to Donald on the subject.

"See for yourself," said Donald; "visit our fields—you will find the work of a slave less, if I am not greatly mistaken, than most freemen are compelled to do. Go to our negro-houses—poor enough I acknowledge; yet better, if travellers may be believed, than many freemen inhabit. Talk with them alone, and if you hear of one such instance of cruelty and oppression as those which are reported every day by our enemies, you will hear what I have never done."

"Do you suppose that all these things are false?"

"That would be hard to say. Power responsible only to public opinion will doubtless be sometimes abused by the passions of men. Yet that these abuses remain the rare exceptions in our system—not its rule as our enemies aver—is, I think, sufficiently proved by the fact that, spending my life

as I have done, here, I have never known a single act of the kind."

"I do not mean to say," Donald resumed, after a moment's silence which Robert Grahame had not interrupted, "that we slave-holders have been blameless toward our slaves: we have sinned against them not by cruelty, but by neglect. To acknowledge the truth, we Southerners have a great deal of the '*Laissez faire*,' about us in all things, which a due sense of our responsibilities would have overborne in relation to our people. But we are waking up, and if we can only shut our ears to the denunciations of our enemies and to the crude speculations of those who seek to teach where they ought to be contented to learn—we may yet make amends to our people and to the world for our long sleep."

"You say you are waking up:—may I ask in what way this is manifested?"

"In many ways—by improvement in their modes of living—improvement in our systems of government—above all, by earnest and persevering efforts to communicate to them sound moral and religious instruction. An absurd law, passed under the influence of passion, kindled by the wicked efforts of pretended philanthropists, to bring upon us the

horrors of an insurrection, forbids us to teach them to read and write; but every plantation has now its daily school, and many have, besides, their chaplain, who is devoted entirely to the instruction of the slaves. There is nothing more nobly self-denying in the history of missionary labour than some incidents I could relate to you of the devotion of slave-holders to this their appropriate work. I could tell you of delicate and cultivated women, leaving the society which they were formed both to adorn and to enjoy, and spending their lives on secluded plantations in this sacred mission. But you must see for yourself; Mary shall take you to her school, and I will carry you to my colony."

"What is that?"

"It is an experiment I am making, which, if it succeed, will, I flatter myself, take from slavery some of its worst features. On a place about four miles from this, where the land has been resting for some years and is now capable of producing well, I have built a few houses of a better class than those usually occupied by our slaves. In these I have placed some of my best and most trustworthy families, away from all surveillance of myself or my agents. I have given them seed for the first year, and told them to go to work as they think best, and at the end of the year they

shall give me a certain proportion of wheat they make as rent for the land and buildings. If these do well, I shall add others occasionally to them—if any grow indolent, the punishment will be to bring them back to their old condition. But do you hear that bell? It rings every evening for their gathering in what they call their 'Prayers House.' I generally meet them there. Will you go with me?"

Robert Grahame assented; and as they walked along, he inquired of Donald how his plans would be carried out during his absence, should he be ordered away.

"My fear that they will not be carried out, and my deepening conviction of their importance, has determined me to resign my commission. Wharton was born a soldier, and will probably always continue one. I must attend to his people and my own too."

They entered the "Prayers House," in which some fifty or sixty negro men and a few women were collected. The room was lit by a single lamp, on a table. There were two chairs, which Robert Grahame and Donald occupied, while the rest of the assembly sat on benches ranged around the room. Donald read from the Bible, and then all knelt, and our old friend, Cato, offered up a simple,

humble prayer, in which the family at the Hall were especially commended to the mercy of Heaven. After this, the gentlemen withdrew, Donald giving a kind good-night to those whom he passed in his way to the door, and Robert Grahame shaking hands with Cato, and nodding to Agrippa, who were his only acquaintances among those assembled. As in more polished assemblies, the stranger's merits were discussed on his disappearance.

"Miss Alice' husband dah han'sum man, for true; but for all dat, I sorry he gone married to de Nort'."

"I tell you what," said Agrippa, "you wunt fin' no gooder man no w'ere. Mr. Grahame gentleman, ebery inch on 'em—entit Uncle Cato?"

"Ah! Bro' Cato can tell we. Wha' you say to dese people from the Nort', Bro' Cato?"

Cato's opinions had become more than ever influential since he had acquired the character of a travelled man, and he expressed them, therefore, with deliberation and caution. After a short pause of apparently earnest thought, he now replied: "De people from de Nort', my friends, is bery much like de figs of de prophet; dem wha' is bad, is bery bad, and dem wha' is good, is bery good. And Miss Alice' husband is good."

Robert Grahame left Georgia with the convic-

tion, that no man who felt that life's highest object was to labour for the advancement of man and the glory of God need mourn that he was born a Southern slave-holder; and that many of this class did so feel. Yet, from this brightening moral aspect of Southern life, as from its natural loveliness, and its social charms, he turned to his own beautiful home with a heart too full of joyous anticipation to have room for one regret.

His dreams have been fulfilled. His beautiful Alice is still as he had named her when first he spoke of love, "the flower of his life." Their spirits have mingled together as he said they would, she softening what was harsh in him, and preserving from the world's grosser influences the purity and delicacy of his soul, and he elevating her above all that is frivolous, and making life's roughest and steepest paths seem smooth and easy by his strong arm and cheering words. They have been blessed beyond the ordinary lot of man. Their wealth has increased with each succeeding year. As an accomplished scholar, as a liberal and beneficent employer, as a hospitable and generous friend, and for the last two winters as an eloquent and wise member of our National Council, he has "won golden opinions from all sorts of people." Richer blessings still they can count. Two brave

boys, and, lovelier even than these, their baby Isabelle, have added new charms to their lives. Yet they have not been without chastening. A flowery mound beside his mother's grave marks where their first-born sleeps, and keeps alive in their hearts the memory of the Heaven in which his spirit dwells. Their best friend can make no better wish for them in parting, than, "May their future be as their past hath been."

Time has passed lightly over the inmates of Montrose Hall, of Laurel Grove, and of the Parsonage. In the last, the venerable Mr. Dunbar still lives, the counsellor and friend of those who were once his pupils. Their children reverence his white hairs, and the young clergyman who has been engaged as their tutor, and his assistant, has been directed to take no step in their education without his advice.

Charles now writes himself commander, or, by courtesy, Captain Montrose, and Donald says he has grown lazy since, and is quite willing to stay at home whenever the Department will let him; to which Charles replies, pointing to his wife and children, that he has three better reasons than laziness for his love of home.

William Clarke and his father are still great Nimrods. William has never married. He says

he is waiting till the little Alice Wharton, now in her tenth year, is old enough to take him, at which the little lady tosses her head with an air that makes her look the image of her still beautiful mamma.

Mrs. John Montrose spends most of her time with her daughter, Mrs. Colonel Wharton, who lives about five miles from Montrose Hall. Years have left some snows upon her raven hair, and we will hope that under the dews of Heaven's mercy, her heart has grown humbler. Isabelle has found in her husband a judicious guide and friend, and in the children who have risen up around her new causes of gratitude, and new incentives to a high and holy life. She is active and judicious in carrying out the plans of Colonel Wharton for the advantage of their people.

And Donald and his high-minded Mary, though last named, not least in our regard or our esteem. Leaders in every noble work, their influence is felt for good wherever their name is known. People say he is a worthy representative of his father, and old Cato prays that his son may be like him.

Cato has made one more voyage to Boston. It was on the occasion of the marriage of Allan Clarke with Ellen Gaston. Allan has settled in Boston, has given up the dreams of his early life for the

active habits of a man of business, and has been taken into partnership by his father-in-law, Mr. Gaston.

Does it seem strange to you, reader, that the poet should have become a merchant? We can only repeat to you the defence which Allan himself has made for it. "Mr. Gaston himself taught me," he says, "that all the lofty thoughts and noble aims, the quick sense and keen love of beauty, natural and moral, which make the poet's life, may exist no less in the merchant. Mr. Gaston has acted poems while I have but dreamed of them."

And thus by the affinities of spirits devoted to the same noble ends—to the advancement of man's happiness, and of God's glory—the North and the South, the Lofty and the Lowly, have been drawn together, and the experience of life has taught to each and all of them, that there is good in all and that none is all good.

THE END.

LONDON :
Printed by Schulze and Co., 13 Poland Street.